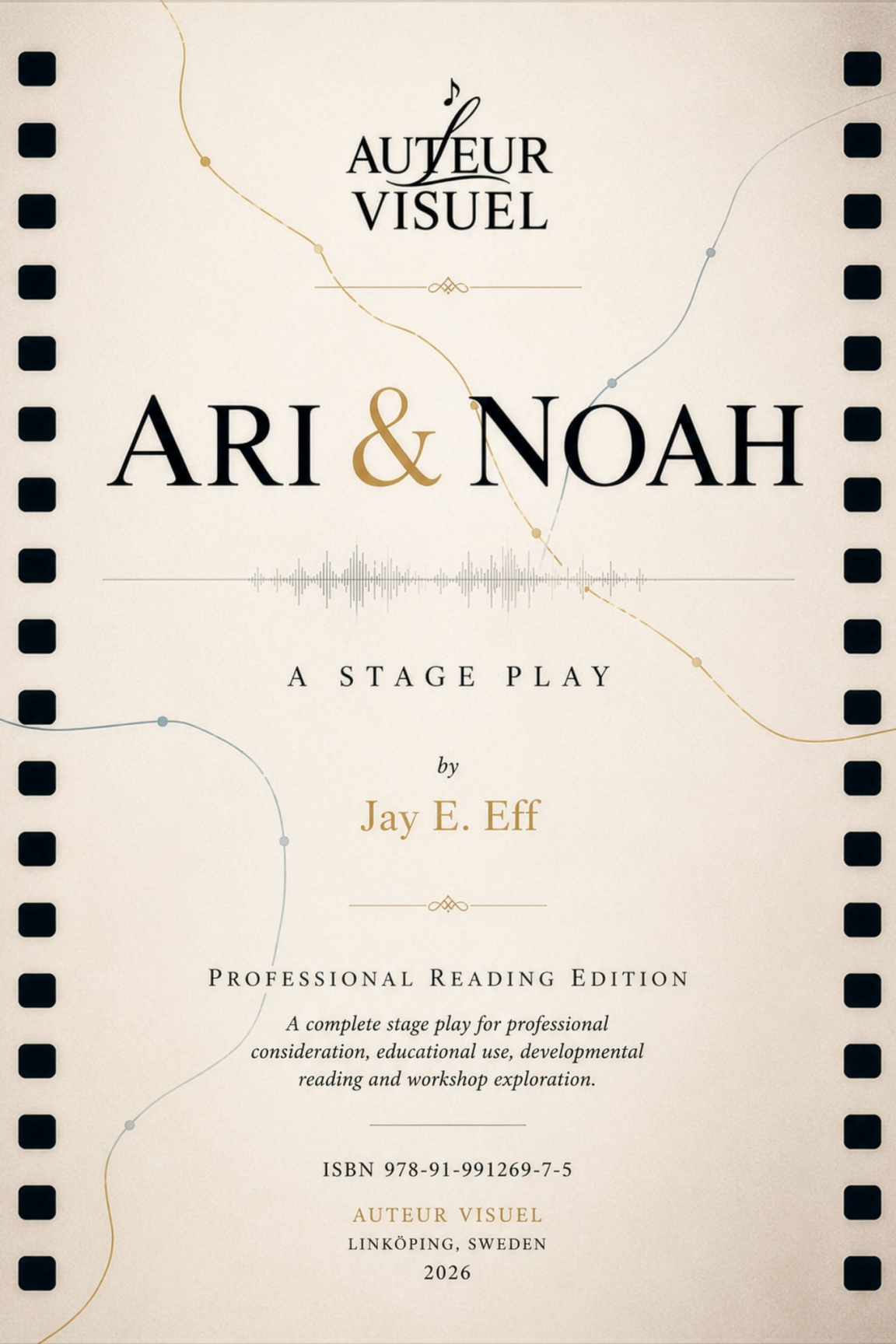
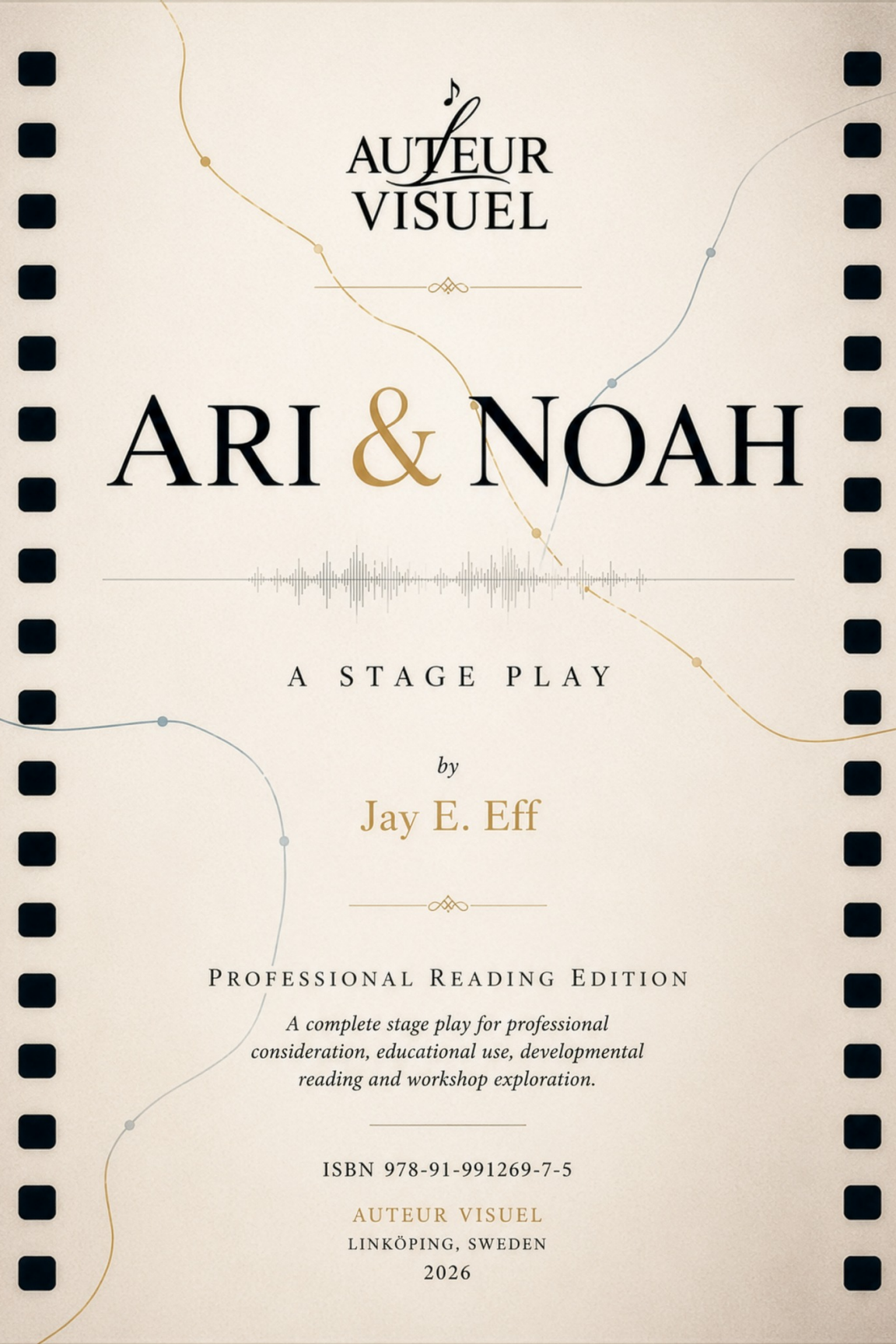




AUTEUR
VISUEL

ARI & NOAH



A STAGE PLAY

by

Jay E. Eff

PROFESSIONAL READING EDITION

*A complete stage play for professional
consideration, educational use, developmental
reading and workshop exploration.*

ISBN 978-91-991269-7-5

AUTEUR VISUEL
LINKÖPING, SWEDEN
2026

Ari & Noah

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Ari & Noah also exists in its literary companion editions: the Standard Edition novel and the Book Club Edition.

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Dramatis Personae

ARI

NOAH

SAM - a young sound artist.

ENSEMBLE A - Mira, Ruth, Elin, Instructor, Caretaker, Self-Checkout Voice, Supplier Voice and selected voices.

ENSEMBLE B - Daniel, Malik, Manager, Bank Voice, transport, facilities and selected professional voices.

ENSEMBLE C - Lea, Lena, Nadi, Technician, Other Parent, Stairwell Participant and selected voices.

ENSEMBLE D - Hana, Jules and selected technical, institutional and telephone voices.

The standard configuration uses seven performers: Ari, Noah, Sam and four ensemble performers. Ari, Noah and Sam are not doubled. The ensemble tracks are designed to preserve the simultaneous role demands written into the play. No role is assigned a gender by the text. Age, embodiment, background and theatrical realisation remain open to production.

Structure and Setting

Structure. Two acts, five movements and sixteen scenes. The interval falls after Scene Twelve.

Playing time. Approximately 110–115 minutes, excluding the interval. Actual running time will vary with staging, transitions and the realisation of sound-led action.

Setting. A flexible contemporary playing space centred on a long table. The same space becomes home, bus, workplace, school, public building, bridge and City Lab through bodies, light, sound and a small number of recurring objects.

Recurring objects. The long table, the almost-blue bowl, Sam's recorder, Ari's camera, phones, calendars and the shared note carry practical and dramatic continuity. Productions may simplify their physical form, but should preserve their functions and relationships.

Scale. The play may be realised with minimal or more elaborate technical resources. Transitions are normally visible and continuous rather than concealed by full blackouts. Practical action may continue beneath speech where clarity and safety permit.

Performance Conventions

Stage directions are written for playable action, spatial change, physical attention and sound. They establish necessary events without fixing every movement, look or pause.

Interior speech appears in italics beneath the speaker's name. It is heard by the audience as immediate perception and is not heard by the other characters.

Messages and mediated voices may be spoken, displayed or combined, provided that their sender, recipient and information remain clear.

Sound is a dramatic layer rather than decorative underscoring. Where sound carries narrative information, productions should preserve equivalent access through captioning, visual cueing, vibration, embodied response or another appropriate non-auditory path.

Ways In is Sam's complete sound work and occupies approximately five minutes. No ordinary dialogue is spoken over it. The sequence is a theatrical event carried by sound, visible action, attention and the changing relation of people to the room; it is not an interlude or a placeholder for music.

The final calendar action is played without accompanying dialogue or score. Its scale should remain ordinary and exact.

ACT I

MOVEMENT I

THE WEEK HOLDS

Scene 1

THURSDAY

The long table is already present. At one end: ARI's office – laptop, programme text, phone. At the other: SAM's recorder, a canvas bag and an empty shelf above the table. The same furniture will become bus, dinner table and bridge without being replaced.

Sound. *A ventilation system changes mode. A distant chair rolls. Three dry taps travel through a radiator pipe.*

ARI changes a calendar entry. The projected or visible time moves from 19:00 to 19:30. The notes remain: BUS 4. RECORDER. NOAH: BREAD?

RUTH - VOICE

Good catch. Can you solve the wording today?

ARI

Yes.

ARI deletes one promise from the programme text, replaces another with something the unit might actually be able to do, sends the file, and adds a sentence to Monday's notes. A message arrives.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Bread secured. Something Daniel will deny wanting.
Leaving the site in ten.

Message - ARI to NOAH

Dinner moved to 19:30. Bus 4, 18:26. Sam has recorder.

Message - NOAH to ARI

I know the bus.

A second message follows.

Message - NOAH to ARI

But thank you.

Transition

The office ventilation becomes the apartment radiator.

ARI crosses the table and arrives home. SAM is kneeling beside the pipe, recorder close to the floor.

SAM

Do not move.

ARI stops with one shoe half removed. The pipe taps again. SAM listens through one ear of the headphones.

ARI

Upstairs water.

SAM

It sounds different through the floor.

ARI

Everything sounds different through the floor.

SAM

That is the point.

NOAH enters with bread and warm pavement still on the coat. The keys stay in NOAH's coat pocket. NOAH kisses ARI once, misses because ARI turns, and kisses ARI again.

NOAH

Pipe?

SAM gives NOAH the headphones. NOAH places one hand on the floor.

NOAH

Water hammer.

SAM

Ari said upstairs water.

NOAH

Ari was right. I have supplied the expensive name.

SAM

Basement tomorrow?

NOAH

Possibly.

ARI looks over.

NOAH

I know. A possible tomorrow is not a plan.

ARI

I did not say anything.

NOAH

You looked in complete sentences.

SAM laughs into the recorder. The level peaks red.

Transition

The three leave. The table becomes Bus 4: SAM over the rear wheel, NOAH with bread between both feet, ARI opposite with the city passing in sections. A crossing signal sounds; a bus brake answers it.

NOAH

Four minutes.

ARI

The display and the application do not use the same source.

NOAH

Then one of them will enjoy being right.

The bus arrives. NOAH turns to SAM, demonstrating with both hands how sound changes through glass. ARI watches.

NOAH

What?

ARI

Nothing.

NOAH

Warm nothing or corrective nothing?

ARI

Warm.

NOAH

Good. I have not prepared for corrections until after soup.

Transition

The bus becomes MIRA and DANIEL's table. MIRA enters with spoons. DANIEL enters already searching for the good knife.

DANIEL

You are early.

ARI

We can walk around the block.

MIRA

No. Come in before Daniel makes time a subject.

NOAH hands over the bread.

NOAH

One responsible loaf and one thing Daniel will deny wanting.

DANIEL

I do not want that.

NOAH

Excellent. Then there is enough.

MIRA cannot find the good knife. ARI opens the narrow drawer beside the stove and takes it from beneath two towels. DANIEL presents a defective speaker cable. NOAH holds the failed end and tests the movement.

DANIEL

It only fails when moved.

NOAH

Then stop moving music.

DANIEL

That is not how sound works.

NOAH

We are making progress.

MIRA lifts a bowl so dark that blue appears only where the glaze thins.

MIRA

This was meant to be blue.

ARI

It is blue in an administrative sense.

MIRA

Exactly. The intention is documented.

MIRA puts the bowl in ARI's hands. For one full breath, ARI does nothing useful. ARI turns the bowl until a narrow line of cobalt returns, then photographs it against the open window.

MIRA

Keep it.

ARI

No. It is your first almost-blue bowl.

MIRA

There are six first bowls. The class is generous with beginnings.

Dinner collects around the long table. SAM records the room, NOAH repairs the speaker, ARI and NOAH pass each other the preferred pieces of bread without looking. For several mouthfuls, the table is quiet. Later, plates are empty, the recorder packed, shoes aligned.

MIRA

You two make Thursdays look easy.

NOAH

It is mostly excellent bread selection.

DANIEL

And calendar intimidation.

ARI

What does that mean?

DANIEL

Mira told me when you were coming. Somehow I believed the time had legal force.

They laugh. MIRA wraps the bowl in newspaper. NOAH places it safely beside the recorder case.

Transition

The table narrows into a bridge rail. SAM listens through headphones. Water moves against stone below, almost regular until another wake arrives. NOAH's hand settles loosely around ARI's wrist.

Sound. *Water beneath the bridge: a hollow pressure, then a second current interrupting it.*

NOAH

Listen.

SAM records. The bus display shows nine minutes; ARI checks the route, sees seven, and locks the phone without speaking. The sound comes again. ARI unwraps the bowl; the last light holds at its rim.

SAM

It is empty.

ARI

That is allowed.

Transition

Home. ARI places the bowl on the shelf above the long table. NOAH does not ask what it will be used for. Darkness, then morning light. Without ceremony, the bowl now contains one spare battery, one transit card and one screw whose origin no one knows.

Scene 2

COMPETENCE / LIMITED PLACES

The long table becomes a return counter. NOAH stands with a faulty adapter, a folder and six unseen people behind. The household end remains dark. ENSEMBLE A is ELIN; ENSEMBLE B supplies MANAGER and BANK VOICE; ENSEMBLE C will become LEA after the errands.

Sound. *A faint electrical tick begins only after the adapter has been connected long enough to prove the fault.*

ELIN

The system says the accessory was replaced after purchase.

NOAH

It was not.

ELIN

I am only saying what the system says.

NOAH

And I am only saying what happened. Can you ask whoever can override it?

The MANAGER tests the unit. Nothing happens. The tick begins. Then the smell arrives. The return is accepted. The same counter becomes a wall phone at a bank.

BANK - VOICE

The case was coded as goods not received.

NOAH

It was a hotel room. We received the room once.

BANK - VOICE

I will reclassify it as a duplicated transaction with partial reversal.

NOAH

Will the case close automatically?

BANK - VOICE

It should.

NOAH

Will it?

BANK - VOICE

I will place a manual review for Friday.

NOAH writes FRIDAY on the folder.

Transition

Home. LEA has arrived with two narrow shelves that fit neither doorway in the position ARI has chosen. NOAH enters with the folder.

LEA

We have established that upright is a moral position, not a spatial one.

NOAH

Top toward the kitchen. Bottom over the threshold.

ARI and NOAH turn the shelves. They clear the door by less than a centimetre. SAM lifts the recorder.

SAM

Do it again.

ARI, NOAH, LEA

No.

Before LEA leaves, LEA returns a small canvas camera case to ARI. The camera has not been used for years.

LEA

You used to send me empty rooms.

ARI

They were not empty.

LEA

They contained chairs.

ARI

And the fact that everyone had left.

NOAH cleans the leaked battery contacts. A second battery accepts charge. The scanner and bank folder are placed before ARI.

ARI

You got them to see it?

NOAH

The person could already see it. The case could not.

ARI

The last ten per cent was all of the part I could not do.

NOAH

Then we have achieved efficient specialisation.

Transition

The following morning. The City Lab message opens at the long table. ARI opens four attachments. SAM sits close enough to read. NOAH brings the repaired thermostat cover.

SAM

How many places?

ARI

Twelve.

SAM

How many schools?

ARI

It does not say.

SAM

Then twelve is not useful yet.

Transition

The City Lab form expands across the long table. SAM sits between ARI and NOAH. A blank document is open beside the application.

SAM

What do I write?

NOAH

Why do you want to go?

SAM

Because it is sounds and maps and things.

ARI

What do you like about that?

SAM

I like that places make things you cannot see.

ARI

Write exactly that.

SAM types. A projection or spoken form voice compresses the remaining questions: previous software, support level, device access, photography consent, attendance. SAM

answers the support questions. ARI and NOAH leave the public-photograph boxes empty. ARI checks which parent can answer during the day before entering the first number.

FORM - VOICE

Can the participant attend at least eighty per cent of meetings?

NOAH

We can manage.

ARI

Probably.

NOAH

For an application, that is yes.

SAM goes quiet at the submit button.

ARI

You do not have to apply.

SAM

I want to. If I press it, they can say no.

NOAH

They can also only say yes after you press it.

SAM

That is not helpful.

NOAH

No. But the application is good. Twelve places do not make it less good.

SAM

Can you press it? Wait until I say.

NOAH places the cursor. SAM breathes once.

SAM

Now.

The page goes white, then confirms receipt. SAM takes the recorder and map to the courtyard. ARI brings the recharged camera. NOAH joins them by a metal grille.

Sound. *A low ventilation hum strengthens where the wall carries it and disappears beside the next door.*

SAM

The sound belongs where it can be heard. The machine belongs where it is.

NOAH

That is two answers.

SAM

It is one sound.

ARI photographs three utility pipes disappearing into brick. NOAH looks at the image.

NOAH

It looks as if the pipes are leaving.

ARI

They are entering.

NOAH

That depends on which side owns the wall.

SAM raises the recorder toward them.

SAM

Say that again.

ARI

No. It sounded better accidentally.

Transition

*Upstairs, the confirmation remains until the tablet dims.
ARI puts the camera on the bookshelf rather than back in
its case. SAM tapes the map beside an empty space. No
one reopens the application.*

Scene 3

OPEN WINDOWS

All windows are open. NOAH stands at the stove with at least six onions already softening. SAM holds the recorder toward the pan. ARI clears folded laundry, stacks mail and moves a chair.

SAM

Why has dinner started?

NOAH

The onions need time to stop being onions.

SAM

They are still onions.

NOAH

Only physically.

SAM

What are they becoming?

NOAH

Patient.

ARI moves a chair from the table to SAM's room, then back.

NOAH

How many are we?

ARI

Six adults, Sam, and possibly one more for dessert.

NOAH

Possibly is not a chair count.

ARI

Seven chairs. I can stand.

NOAH

You cannot host from the floor.

ARI

I can host from anywhere.

NOAH points ARI to napkins in a hall drawer. ARI finds them exactly there. Passing the stove, ARI rests one palm briefly between NOAH's shoulder blades, then carries the napkins to the table.

ARI

What remains?

NOAH

Bread. Salad. Persuading Daniel not to repair the speaker while people are eating.

ARI

The table is done.

The doorbell rings forty minutes early. ARI stops. NOAH checks the dough rather than the clock.

NOAH

Mira.

ARI

Mira said six.

NOAH

Mira says times as ranges.

MIRA enters with dessert, apologises once and begins cutting fennel. DANIEL follows with a speaker that rattles. HANA arrives with two folding chairs. NADI enters with flowers wrapped in paper and places them beside the stove.

MIRA

I came early to be useful.

NOAH

Stop Daniel repairing anything.

MIRA

I have never had that power.

HANA

I brought chairs.

ARI

Good. Here.

DANIEL plugs in the speaker. The kitchen lights, extractor and window outlet die. The oven and refrigerator continue. Everyone stops for half a beat, then moves.

Sound. *The speaker cuts. A fuse clicks. The extractor returns at maximum force.*

DANIEL

That may have been me.

NOAH

A rare moment of clarity.

ARI opens the hall cupboard. Coats must move before the fuse panel can be reached. MIRA holds a wooden spoon, HANA two coats and the wine, NADI catches the flowers, DANIEL unplugs the speaker. SAM stands at the kitchen threshold with the recorder raised.

ARI

Do not record the fuse panel.

SAM

I am recording everyone knowing what happened.

NOAH

Daniel, unplug. Ari, left kitchen circuit, not the main.

ARI

I know.

NOAH

I know you know. I am describing the sequence.

The switch resets. The extractor seizes the flower paper; NADI catches it before it enters the sauce. One edge of the onions has darkened. NOAH adds water. The pan settles.

MIRA

Useful.

ARI

Move the flowers.

ARI moves the flowers to the bedroom, gives DANIEL the bread knife and clears a path to the table. NOAH lifts the pasta pot while MIRA holds the colander and HANA moves the chairs. NADI finishes the herbs. SAM places the recorder on the shelf with permission.

SAM

Room layer. Chairs, cutlery, the piano outside.

DANIEL

Will you record us eating?

SAM

Only if it sounds different.

NOAH

It will. Daniel breathes through criticism.

DANIEL

This knife is too dull.

NOAH

Evidence.

Dinner reaches the table as the last person sits. Conversation travels. NOAH passes the bread; ARI refills a glass before its owner asks. Under the table, NOAH's foot finds ARI's ankle.

NADI

You should hear Ari at work.

NOAH

I have heard Ari remove paragraphs at home.

ARI

From what?

NOAH

Conversations.

Later, plates have become scattered objects rather than settings. HANA leans back and looks around.

HANA

You make this look effortless.

ARI

Noah started at three.

DANIEL

That is not an answer. That is proof.

NOAH

Proof of onions.

NADI

And Ari has refilled every glass.

They laugh. HANA lifts the glass toward ARI and NOAH. ARI and NOAH accept the toast without answering.

Dessert. ARI remains standing behind NOAH's chair and eats from NOAH's plate. NOAH makes room on the narrow bench and draws ARI down beside them.

NOAH

You are now doing dessert.

ARI

I was doing something.

ARI's shoulder settles beneath NOAH's chin. NOAH's hand rests over ARI's knee. Around them, the gathering begins to leave: coats return to bodies, conversations narrow into doorways, a bicycle key appears beneath the batteries in the almost-blue bowl. SAM plays thirty seconds of room layer.

Sound. *A brief room layer: cutlery, chair legs, fragments of names, a burst of laughter no one can assign to one person. SAM stops it.*

Transition

Late. The household alone. NOAH closes containers and wipes the stove. ARI clears glasses and straightens chairs while NOAH is still at the stove.

NOAH

Leave it.

ARI

I am nearly done.

NOAH

You are never nearly done. You are near the next category.

ARI

The next category is sleep.

NOAH

Excellent category.

ARI carries two glasses toward the kitchen, stops, and puts them on the coffee table instead.

NOAH

Illegal.

ARI

Temporary storage.

NOAH

A dangerous doctrine.

ARI sits sideways, still angled toward the kitchen. After a moment, the shoulders drop against NOAH.

Transition

Morning. The apartment still holds the shape of the gathering: one chair by the balcony, a glass behind the curtain, the table not yet restored. ARI enters wearing NOAH's shirt and stands in the middle of the room.

NOAH

We can leave it until after breakfast.

ARI

I am looking.

NOAH

At damage?

ARI

At evidence that people were here.

ARI sits on the floor beside the table and drinks coffee before it becomes cold. SAM plays the unidentified laugh again.

NOAH is audible at the end and MIRA at the beginning; the voices overlap in the middle.

Scene 4

THE ROUTE HOME / WHAT SEEMS OBVIOUS

SAM packs for an overnight birthday: recorder, notebooks, no toothbrush. NOAH stands at the refrigerator. ARI answers a work message at the long table. A message from NADI arrives.

Message - NADI to HOUSEHOLD

Two free tickets for the old depot. Small band from Helsinki, apparently impossible to describe. Doors 20:30. Anyone?

NOAH

Do we have plans?

ARI

Which plans?

NOAH

The plans in which we leave the apartment.

SAM

Go.

ARI

You still need a toothbrush.

SAM

There are other toothbrushes in the world.

NOAH

Sam's philosophy is expanding.

ARI checks HANA's collection time, the bus, the doors, the support act, the last service and the unfinished work message. NOAH has already opened the venue page.

ARI

How long is it?

NOAH

The band or the evening?

ARI

Both.

NOAH

No idea. Last regular bus is 00:18. Night bus 01:10.

ARI

You checked.

NOAH

I wanted you to say yes.

NOAH accepts the tickets. The household moves quickly: toothbrush found, charger packed, HANA collects SAM, ARI closes the laptop without reopening it.

Transition

The long table becomes the old depot: concrete, iron, a fixed railway clock at 4:17. ARI takes out the camera.

NOAH traces an obsolete freight line behind the bar.

NADI meets them with the tickets and then disappears toward the front.

Sound. *Original depot music: first sparse and repetitive, then louder and stranger, with metal strikes and a clarinet where no space seemed available.*

ARI begins with folded arms. By the fourth piece, the body follows the pulse. NOAH notices and turns back toward the stage before ARI can see the noticing. Halfway through, ARI takes NOAH's hand without looking.

NOAH

Do you like it?

ARI

I do not know yet.

NOAH

That seems correct.

The encore begins after coats are already half on. A single note holds beneath small metallic knocks. ARI lowers the camera, closes their eyes and keeps hold of NOAH's hand.

ARI

That one.

NOAH

What about it?

ARI

Nothing. That one.

Afterward, applause loses coordination in the dark. Lights return.

ARI

I am glad we came.

NOAH

Recorded.

ARI

Do not make it evidence.

NOAH

I was making it memory.

Transition

Outside after rain. The bus is in nine minutes. ARI accelerates. At a red crossing NOAH stops ARI from stepping into the empty road. They reach the bus as it arrives.

NOAH

See?

ARI

See what?

NOAH

We arrived.

ARI

Because I checked.

NOAH

Also yes.

On the bus, ARI covers NOAH's hand on ARI's knee. The driver announces a diversion and terminates early. The doors open near the library.

BUS DRIVER - VOICE

Bridge closed. This service terminates here.

Transition

They walk beside the river. The route display shows four extra minutes. ARI puts the phone away. Water, tyres, downpipes and one bottle rolling under a bench fill the quieter city.

ARI photographs empty shelters across the water. NOAH finds a smooth piece of blue glass and places it in ARI's coat pocket.

ARI

What is that for?

NOAH

Your collection of objects without tasks.

ARI

I do not have one.

NOAH

It has begun.

At home, ARI puts the glass into the almost-blue bowl. A circled SPEAKER remains on the calendar.

NOAH

Tuesday.

ARI

I did not ask.

NOAH

You looked.

ARI

I looked at the calendar.

NOAH

In complete sentences.

Transition

A sharp change of light. Monday morning. The concert sound drains into office ventilation and printer noise. ARI sends the same attachment twice. RUTH's reply appears.

Message - RUTH to ARI

Got it the first time, but grateful for the deluxe edition.

ARI smiles. The smile leaves. Problems cross the table: double-booked room, returned wording, a timetable request. At lunch ARI finds NOAH already assigned to SAM's dentist appointment and checks the clinic entrance anyway. It has not changed.

ARI leaves the office with the camera and no destination. The table becomes an empty theatre foyer after a lecture: loose rows of chairs, a lectern, a paper cup. ARI crouches and photographs the chair legs against the window light.

CARETAKER

We close in five minutes. Are you documenting damage?

ARI

No.

CARETAKER

Good. There is none. At least none that belongs to us.

A message from NOAH arrives: the dentist is still on; SAM is bringing the soft toothbrush as evidence of product decline. ARI laughs aloud, pockets the phone and takes no photograph.

Transition

Home. The replacement scanner waits on the long table, ordered by NOAH, correct adapter, warranty extended. ARI begins lentils by heating water that is not needed. NOAH and SAM return.

SAM

No cavities. The brush is too soft for anything.

NOAH

It is designed for teeth, not municipal paving.

ARI

How was the entrance?

NOAH

Courtyard. The bus was on time. The patient number was in the calendar.

NOAH looks at the boiling water and dry lentils.

NOAH

A conceptual version?

ARI

I changed method.

NOAH

To water?

NOAH installs the scanner while ARI cooks. The test page runs straight. ARI asks for it again. Straight again. SAM records the rollers. Later NOAH places fresh tea beside ARI; the earlier mug is found cold on the bookshelf.

ARI

I forgot it.

NOAH

The new one is better.

ARI

That is not the point.

NOAH

What is the point?

ARI looks at the two mugs, opens their mouth and closes it. NOAH asks to see the photographs instead. They look together at an image where chair legs cross the window light and the paper cup is sharp.

NOAH

Maybe the cup is the subject.

ARI

It is not.

NOAH

Then the photograph has survived my interpretation.

Transition

Bedroom. NOAH repairs the seam of SAM's old equipment backpack. Beyond the doorway: the installed scanner, the dental bag and the fresh mug. ARI remains standing at the threshold.

NOAH

What?

ARI

Nothing.

NOAH

Warm nothing or corrective nothing?

ARI

Tired nothing.

NOAH holds out a hand. ARI sits on the bed. NOAH's thumb rests over ARI's pulse.

NOAH lifts ARI's wrist and presses it briefly to NOAH's cheek.

NOAH

Come to bed.

ARI nods, stands – and goes to check that SAM's water bottle is clean for Wednesday. Blackout.

MOVEMENT II

THE SECOND SCHEDULE

Scene 5

TWO UNITS / A PLACE

A municipal meeting has been assembled around the long table. A sign by an imaginary lift points ADULT LEARNING and CULTURAL PROGRAMMES in the same direction; a third hand-drawn arrow points toward the toilets. RUTH holds two coffees and a folder.

RUTH

At least the facilities are integrated.

ARI

The meeting room is double-booked.

RUTH

Already?

ARI

Still. Both systems transferred the booking.

ENSEMBLE voices overlap: budgets, substitute instructors, spring catalogues, attendance systems. ARI writes three headings: ACTUALLY CHANGING. PEOPLE THINK CHANGING. WILL FAIL IF NO ONE DECIDES. The third list grows.

INSTRUCTOR - VOICE

I only need to know where my course is on Thursday.

The overlapping questions stop. An instructor points to two timetables that give two rooms. Someone says they are the same room.

ARI

They are not. That number is from the temporary building. The upstairs hall's induction loop is broken. Two participants need it.

FACILITIES - VOICE

That request is in registration, not room booking.

ARI

Yes.

ARI says nothing else. The course moves to the reading room, a firing shifts by forty minutes, and the library yields one morning. A receiver is held to ARI's ear.

INDUCTION TEST - VOICE

The loop is now active in this room.

ARI

Working?

TECHNICIAN - VOICE

Now it is.

RUTH gives ARI the thick folder.

RUTH

Can you make a temporary combined overview?
Something that shows collisions until migration is done.

ARI

It cannot become the source record. Changes stay in the originals, and disagreements stay visible.

RUTH

This is why I asked you. Friday?

ARI

Friday.

Transition

*The meeting dissolves into a wall of six large sheets.
Staff mark errors first. Then pens move to collisions
scheduled for the same room or person.*

Transition

*Home before dawn. SAM stands in the bedroom doorway,
fully dressed except for one sock.*

SAM

The pigeon has chosen.

*NOAH opens the City Lab message on the phone. ARI reads
from the other side of the bed.*

CITY LAB - VOICE

We are pleased to offer Sam a place.

SAM

I got in.

ARI

You did.

NOAH

You got in.

*SAM reads the line again, looks at ARI and NOAH, then
runs toward the kitchen.*

NOAH

Sock.

SAM

Later.

At the long table, SAM lines up recorder, map, microphone and headphones.

SAM

They say simple electronics. Can we make something?

NOAH

Tonight. After dinner. A contact microphone.

SAM

What does it contact?

NOAH

Anything that vibrates.

SAM

Everything vibrates.

NOAH

Then we have options.

Transition

Evening. ARI has printed the acceptance and marked the preliminary residential weekend. NOAH empties cable, a piezo disc, foam and a small metal housing onto a cutting board. SAM brings an old biscuit tin of components.

SAM tests the purchased housing against the table. A bright tail rings after each tap.

SAM

The box keeps talking after the table stops.

NOAH

That may be useful.

SAM

It is not the table. Use the lid.

SAM chooses the biscuit-tin lid. NOAH explains the strain path and moves the cable exit. SAM demonstrates how it will sit in the recorder bag. NOAH moves it back.

SAM

Your angle is better for the circuit. Mine is better for carrying it.

NOAH

Then yours is better for the object.

They solder with the window open. The first joint fails when the cable moves. SAM goes still.

SAM

I broke it.

NOAH

We learned where it breaks.

SAM

That is what people say when something breaks.

NOAH

Sometimes people are correct.

They rebuild: tubing before joint, brace inside housing, strain loop outside. ARI closes the laptop and watches. SAM presses the finished microphone beneath the long table. NOAH taps once.

Sound. *A small fingernail tap becomes a deep wooden event. Water in the radiator becomes close rushing pressure. A passing bus remains as a metallic shiver in the balcony rail after its engine is gone.*

ARI

That is not what it sounds like in the room.

SAM

It is what it sounds like here.

ARI

Different claims.

SAM

Both sounds.

Transition

Courtyard. The gate knocks internally. Footsteps arrive through stone before the people round the corner. SAM presses the microphone to the lift door.

SAM

It is coming before the number changes.

NOAH

The machine moves before the display reports it.

HANA exits the lift with groceries.

HANA

Should I be worried?

SAM

We made an ear for the building.

Transition

Back at the table. SAM crosses out CONTACT MIC on the case and writes TABLE EAR.

NOAH

It works on more than tables.

SAM

Names do not have to include everything.

ARI

Correct.

ARI turns the object over carefully.

ARI

I would not have known how to make this.

NOAH

You knew what it had to do. This one is mine.

ARI

Yes.

NOAH fixes the acceptance letter to the refrigerator with a magnet. The motor begins; the paper trembles. SAM holds the Table Ear against the door.

SAM

I have a place.

NOAH

You have a place.

The refrigerator hum continues into the transition.

Scene 6

THE OFFER / BEHIND

The long table is a small cafe beside the municipal theatre. RUTH places a closed folder between two coffees. Through the window, stage workers carry half a painted wall and part of a blue sky.

RUTH

This is not about the overview. People are using it as the source record.

ARI

It says not to.

RUTH

We need a person.

RUTH opens the folder: full time, permanent, formal authority across both units, January start.

RUTH

The senior programme coordinator role is approved. I want to offer it to you, subject to the internal process.

ARI

Eight thirty to five.

RUTH

Four thirty on Fridays.

ARI

Sam finishes school before four.

RUTH

You do not have to answer now.

ARI

When?

RUTH

End of next week. Think about wanting it as well as managing it.

The folder crosses to ARI. The cafe disappears but the folder remains. In the theatre foyer, dancers reflect over buses in the window. ARI takes a photograph without correcting the double image. A colleague says congratulations. ARI nods and adds nothing.

Transition

Home. NOAH is making pasta. SAM has the Table Ear attached to a glass jar. ARI places the folder on the long table.

ARI

Ruth offered me the senior role.

NOAH

The joint one?

ARI

Yes. Full time. Fixed hours.

NOAH

Do you want it?

ARI

Yes.

NOAH

Then congratulations.

ARI

I have not accepted.

NOAH

Congratulations on wanting it.

SAM

Will you be the boss?

ARI

Not of everyone.

SAM

Then what is the point?

NOAH

Some decisions will be Ari's.

They open a test calendar. Grey work blocks fill January. NOAH adds City Lab Tuesdays. ARI moves through appointments not yet known.

NOAH

We can map the fixed things. I can shift planned site days.

ARI

And the unplanned things?

NOAH

We decide when they arrive.

ARI

It is not only logistics.

NOAH

I know. It is your work becoming the size it already is.

ARI stops moving the calendar blocks and looks at NOAH.

NOAH

Take the job. That is my answer about the job. We will map the household separately.

ARI

I want it. I am afraid wanting it makes the rest less possible.

NOAH

The household has worked partly because you were available to everything. It should not require that.

ARI reaches for NOAH's hand. Later, on the balcony, sparkling water in wine glasses.

NOAH

Say it without the practical problems.

ARI

I got the role.

NOAH

Again.

ARI

I got the role.

NOAH

You got the role.

Transition

A green test line appears across the space and stops. Two indicators turn amber. A relay opens with a small click. The cafe folder becomes NOAH's event log. MALIK, TECHNICIAN and JULES occupy Ensemble B, C and D. Ensemble A, released when RUTH leaves, carries the SUPPLIER VOICE where required.

NOAH

Run it again.

Sound. *Eleven seconds of steady machine state. A relay opens. The same amber indicators return.*

MALIK

Sensor?

NOAH

Correct.

MALIK

Controller?

NOAH

Acts on what it receives.

MALIK

Then what is wrong?

NOAH

They agree about the word status. Not about what status does.

A supplier voice defends the approved documentation.

NOAH traces the actual signal. It remains high after the underlying condition clears.

SUPPLIER - VOICE

Then the problem is documentation.

NOAH

The pump does not read documents.

JULES enters with laptop and a paper notebook.

JULES

Tell me the failure in one minute. Not responsibility. Sequence.

NOAH

A's status stays true after the condition clears. B reads it as the present state. During transition, B acts on old information.

JULES

What changed today?

NOAH

We tested the full transition.

JULES

What remains unknown?

NOAH

How many other interfaces use different assumptions.

JULES

What do you need before four?

NOAH

Actual exported configurations from all three suppliers.

JULES writes four headings where everyone can see them: OBSERVED. CONFIRMED. UNKNOWN. NEXT DECISION. MALIK and the TECHNICIAN stop talking and turn to the headings.

Transition

Late afternoon. Exports arrive in incompatible forms.

JULES holds a damaged charger cable steady while NOAH opens an old service laptop. Coffee spills on the notebook.

JULES

Paper keeps failure local.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Test failed safely. I will be late. I do not know how late yet.

Message - ARI to NOAH

Understood. Sam and I will eat. Send a time when you have one.

At nineteen hundred they have seven mismatches. Three harmless, two requiring configuration, one client decision, one still unknown.

MALIK

Enough to cancel tomorrow.

JULES

Enough to replace tomorrow. Use the slot for interface review.

NOAH

That is useful.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Leaving in fifteen. Home around 20:20.

Message - ARI to NOAH

Soup in the refrigerator. Sam recorded the washing machine during spin and believes the floor is speaking.

Transition

Home. Slippers by the radiator. A covered bowl with a note: THREE MINUTES. STIR AFTER TWO. NOAH follows the instruction exactly. ARI enters from the alcove.

ARI

Safe failure?

NOAH

The best kind.

ARI

Did anything break?

NOAH

Only the schedule.

ARI

That was already broken.

NOAH

Now it is documented.

NOAH gives the one-minute version.

NOAH

A remembered. B treated it as the present. Correct alone. Wrong together.

ARI

Can you fix it?

NOAH

Some. The rest requires decisions from people who thought the interface was already decided.

SAM appears with headphones.

SAM

The washing machine has four rhythms. The third is when it moves across the floor.

NOAH

It should not move. Tomorrow.

SAM

A real tomorrow?

NOAH

Before seven. Saturday otherwise.

SAM

That is two plans.

ARI

Both are true.

Later, bed. ARI reads the internal role description on the phone. NOAH lies down.

ARI

Who is Jules?

NOAH

Project interface. New to the team.

ARI

Useful?

NOAH

Yes.

ARI

Good.

ARI places the phone face down and rests a hand between NOAH's shoulder blades. NOAH's shoulders lower. Neither reaches for the phone.

Scene 7

SORE THROAT

Friday morning. NOAH stands in the kitchen wearing a sweater, holding hot water and attempting a normal work posture. The voice is nearly gone.

ARI

You are not going to the site.

NOAH

I can work from home.

ARI

That is not what I said.

NOAH

It is the available alternative.

SAM enters, hears the voice and raises the recorder.

NOAH

No.

SAM

It is a temporary voice.

NOAH

No.

SAM

Can I write what it sounds like?

ARI

That is not recording.

NOAH sends one message to MALIK. JULES replies with a table and one yes-or-no question. NOAH types YES and closes the laptop.

ARI

That is all? They do not need a call?

NOAH shakes the head and lies down. ARI closes the laptop on the floor, moves the cup from the edge, covers NOAH with a blanket.

RUTH - VOICE

The catalogue can move to Monday. Stay at home in a more official capacity.

NOAH sleeps. ARI carries a laptop between alcove and kitchen, lowers speaker volume, moves the grocery delivery, and adds lemons, vegetables, lozenges and yoghurt. The thermometer rises.

NOAH

You do not have to run a response unit.

ARI

I am ordering yoghurt.

NOAH

You have the emergency face.

ARI

You cannot see your own face.

NOAH

I can see yours.

ARI touches NOAH's forehead and leaves the hand there. NOAH catches ARI's wrist and presses the palm briefly to the cheek.

ARI

I am here.

Night divides into short intervals: water, thermometer, pillowcase, sleep. SAM eats soup, then lies on the floor near the sofa with the Table Ear against the radiator. At midnight

ARI sits on the floor until the fever falls. NOAH's hand finds ARI's hair and remains only until sleep returns.

Transition

Saturday. City Lab occupies a former warehouse: maps, cables, black curtains, mismatched chairs. LENA speaks to parents and participants. NOAH's empty place is not marked.

LENA - VOICE

Listening walks. Equipment borrowing. Consent before recording other people. A spring residential weekend. Optional supervised time after selected sessions.

ARI writes down the dates. SAM attaches the Table Ear to a metal chair leg. Corridor footsteps arrive through it before the people do. Another parent asks about the device.

SAM

Noah and I made it. Noah knows electronics. Ari knows forms.

ARI and the other parent laugh. SAM returns to the chair leg.

Transition

Home. NOAH is on the sofa, fever lower. The kitchen counter has been wiped and the dishwasher is closed.

ARI

You should be resting.

NOAH points to the dishwasher.

ARI

You loaded it. That is still doing something.

NOAH raises both hands in surrender. SAM reports the workshop in full. NOAH types questions on the phone. SAM places a borrowed windscreen on NOAH's arm.

Message - NOAH to SAM

I am currently outdoor air.

Sunday. The fever is lower. ARI returns with bread and finds NOAH seated, slowly peeling apples while SAM reads a recipe.

ARI

You are meant to rest.

Message - NOAH to ARI

This is seated.

ARI takes the knife and finishes the apples. SAM measures. NOAH adds cinnamon by smell and remains seated.

SAM

I did not record. I wrote: dry stone voice.

Monday. NOAH eats, stands, and speaks above a whisper. A twelve-minute project call ends without repetition. ARI brings tea.

ARI

This one is here.

NOAH

Documented.

ARI takes six minutes with the camera in the snowy courtyard. On returning, ARI finds dinner ready: rice, eggs, vegetables, broth. City Lab dates appear on the wall calendar in NOAH's handwriting. ARI discovers a loose coat button has been resewn.

ARI

You repaired this.

NOAH

It was hanging.

ARI

When did you notice?

NOAH

Friday. The button remained visible.

ARI

Thank you.

NOAH

Eat.

For the first time in four days, ARI sits before everyone else. NOAH carries the bowls. SAM describes a school recording. ARI eats while the food is hot and does not stand again.

Transition

A brief coda. The grocery delivery remains on Friday. ARI still opens City Lab messages first. NOAH brings the missing bread without being asked and replaces a loose headphone label with fabric tape.

NOAH

That will survive the residential weekend.

ARI

The residential weekend is in April.

NOAH

The label is ambitious.

The next session belongs to NOAH. When the City Lab message arrives, ARI checks the repaired label anyway and leaves the message starred.

Scene 8

THE LATE VERSION

The long table carries three possible dinners at once. A pot that can wait. A container with a lid. A place setting that may or may not be laid. ARI checks a work chat that NOAH has never used for household messages, then the project calendar that cannot say when anyone will leave.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Still in review.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Leaving after the client call.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Do not wait.

Message - ARI to NOAH

Sam ate. Soup is in the refrigerator. City Lab bag is ready.

ARI

I stop deciding whether Noah will be here. I make an evening that can hold without an answer and still make room when the answer changes.

The first iteration. A message arrives at 16:20, before ARI starts cooking.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Supplier review added. Home 19:10. Please eat. I will take City Lab Saturday and make dinner tomorrow.

ARI reads once. Rice and vegetables are made for two. NOAH's portion goes directly into the container. No third place is set. SAM asks when.

ARI

Seven ten. Approximately enough.

ARI and SAM eat. Homework finishes. ARI photographs winter branches reflected in the dark balcony door. At 19:08 a bus photograph arrives. At 19:12 the key turns. NOAH reheats food, listens to SAM's school-stair recording, then packs Saturday's City Lab bag.

ARI

That was a good late evening.

NOAH

A review I am pleased to receive.

ARI

I mean the message.

NOAH

I know.

Transition

The container from the first evening remains on the table as later messages appear around it. The times become more precise and less final.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Interface review ends 18:30. Bus 18:47 if we finish.
Home 19:22.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Client added one item. Missed bus. Next arrival 19:51.

ARI writes the first time at the left edge of a range, moves the grocery delivery, marks City Lab evenings, and replaces fresh food with food that can wait.

Transition

First Thursday of December. At breakfast, NOAH cuts SAM's toast diagonally.

NOAH

The review ends at four. I should be home by five thirty. Six if it expands.

ARI

A real four?

NOAH

A client four. Highest available precision. Do not make durable food.

ARI

I was planning soup.

NOAH

Soup is the most durable food.

ARI

Then come home and prevent it.

NOAH

I will.

Transition

At work, RUTH gives ARI the signed confirmation of the senior role. The authority boundaries are attached. January is real.

RUTH

Celebrate.

ARI

Tonight.

Message - ARI to NOAH

Photograph of the signed role confirmation.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Official. I am proud of you. Home on time. I will bring something unnecessary.

ARI leaves two 16:28 emails unopened, buys winter branches with red berries and cooks fish that cannot wait. Potatoes. Greens. Wine opened, then closed. The review calendar shows COMPLETE at 17:20. No message.

The kitchen becomes a clock without projection: potatoes drained at 17:40; oven lowered at 17:53; fish moved at 18:00; phone checked at 18:07.

Message - ARI to NOAH

Everything all right?

Message - NOAH to ARI

Yes. Leaving now. I thought I sent this: home 18:45.
Sorry.

ARI's hand remains on the oven door. Then the late version begins: fish cooled for the refrigerator, potatoes reassigned to tomorrow, greens left uncut, eggs made for SAM, wine returned to cold.

SAM

Is Noah late?

ARI

Noah will be home at six forty-five.

SAM

Is that late?

ARI

It is later than we expected.

*SAM accepts the distinction. At 18:38 the door opens.
NOAH enters with cold air and a small cake iced OFFICIAL.*

NOAH

I am sorry. I wrote the message and did not send it.

NOAH

They had no unnecessary objects. Only unnecessary sugar.

ARI laughs at the cake. NOAH looks from the cake to the kitchen.

NOAH

You cooked.

ARI

The fish is in the refrigerator.

NOAH

I can eat it cold.

ARI

It is not about eating it cold.

NOAH becomes still. ARI lifts the cake between them.

ARI

The process is complete. Ruth gave me the signed role.

NOAH

Ari – we should celebrate.

ARI

We are.

NOAH puts both hands around ARI's upper arms.

NOAH

I am proud of you. I am sorry I was late.

ARI

You are not late now.

They eat cake. SAM records the knife entering the icing and calls the sound disappointing. ARI laughs. The fish remains in the refrigerator.

Transition

Winter. The same route repeats in altered light. ARI puts gloves on before leaving work, searches for keys while opening the calendar, lights only the room currently used. Late versions begin earlier. NOAH sometimes messages before ARI asks, sometimes after dinner has already divided.

One evening NOAH enters into kitchen light while the hall remains dark.

NOAH

Are we hiding?

ARI

The hall did not need light.

NOAH turns the hall light on, looks at ARI, and turns it off again. They both laugh.

Transition

The third iteration. Soup is already in progress. Bread sliced. SAM's City Lab bag packed. Two places laid. At 17:10 a message arrives.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Review cancelled. Leaving now. Home 17:42.

ARI reads until the onions catch. NOAH arrives at 17:40, two minutes early, with no apology and no paper bag.

NOAH

I defeated the late version.

ARI

You did.

NOAH

Durable food.

ARI

It was cold.

NOAH

Also true.

NOAH kisses ARI and sets the third place.

NOAH

How was the day?

On the table: the printed spring catalogue, Ruth's approved responsibility map and SAM's labelled headphones. By four, ARI had already laid two places.

ARI

Fine.

They eat soup while it is hot. NOAH finds the frozen celebration fish.

NOAH

You froze the celebration fish.

ARI

It became a future meal.

NOAH

Friday.

ARI

You may be late.

NOAH

Saturday.

ARI

City Lab.

NOAH

Sunday.

ARI

Sunday is possible.

NOAH

A real possible?

ARI

A conditional one.

NOAH writes FISH beneath Sunday without a time. SAM adds a small wave. They clear the table. NOAH washes; ARI dries; SAM listens to water through the metal sink.

NOAH

You were prepared for me not to be here.

ARI

You were expected late.

NOAH

And then I was not.

ARI

Yes. I am glad you came home.

NOAH

I am glad I came home.

NOAH's hand finds ARI's waist in the narrow kitchen. ARI leans back into the contact until SAM calls from the hall: the sink recording sounds like a tunnel. They go to listen.

After SAM is asleep, ARI takes the unused food container, folds or nests it, and places it back in the drawer. The soup pot, third place and packed City Lab bag remain. Blackout. End of Movement II.

MOVEMENT III

THE SHARED NOTE / THE
WORDS

Scene 9

NEXT / NOT DONE

First Sunday after New Year. Wet snow against the windows. The long table holds old transit cards, an open calendar, an unlabeled jar and a paper list written on the back of ARI's signed role confirmation. NOAH stands at the kitchen cupboard. SAM cuts the transit cards into map shapes.

NOAH

Where did you put the list?

ARI

Which list?

NOAH

City Lab, dentist, school. The one that requires us to do something.

ARI

There are several things from school.

NOAH

Exactly.

ARI finds the paper. NOAH brings the brown jar.

NOAH

Is this cumin?

ARI

It could be coriander.

NOAH smells it.

NOAH

Cumin.

ARI

Then label it.

NOAH

I meant where the list lives after you leave tomorrow.

NOAH reads: waterproof pouch, information evening, dentist confirmation, Hana on the twenty-third, recorder memory card. ARI opens the calendar.

ARI

I can put it in the calendar.

NOAH

Some of it is not an event. And the calendar is full of things that look decided when they are not.

NOAH holds out the paper.

NOAH

Can we make one note? Not a message thread. A note with headings.

SAM

Headings make everything worse.

ARI

Only when the headings are bad.

SAM

All headings are bad until the thing underneath is finished.

ARI opens the ordinary shopping-note application. Types HOUSEHOLD.

NOAH

That sounds like a government department. Call it Next.

ARI

Some things are not next.

NOAH

They are next eventually.

SAM

Call it Not Done.

The title becomes NEXT / NOT DONE. Headings appear as the three speak: NEEDS A DECISION. WAITING FOR SOMEONE ELSE. CAN BE DONE NOW. HAS A DATE. SAM reaches across the keyboard and adds NOBODY KNOWS WHAT THIS MEANS.

ARI

That is not a category.

NOAH

It is the largest category.

The list begins to move. NOAH claims the City Lab pouch, then moves it when the required size is unclear. ARI enters NOAH beside the dentist confirmation.

NOAH

You cannot assign me while I am sitting here.

ARI

I asked with my eyes.

NOAH

Your eyes had already entered the initials.

ARI removes the N. NOAH puts it back. NOAH messages HANA about the twenty-third.

Message - HANA to HOUSEHOLD

Probably yes. Confirm that week.

SAM adds THURSDAY SOUND: POSSIBLY LIFT, POSSIBLY BUILDING, then FIND OUT WHETHER CROWS

CAN RECOGNISE BUS DRIVERS. NOAH photographs the unlabeled cumin. ARI moves it to DONE once the label is applied. SAM moves it back because the label is crooked.

NOAH

Aesthetic dispute.

ARI

The governance framework has failed.

SAM

Put that under nobody knows what this means.

NOAH does. A loose hinge screw becomes a line, then a physical repair, then DONE. The three take coats, recorder and thermos.

Transition

At the lake, boots break thin ice at puddle edges. SAM lowers the recorder toward water moving beneath a drainage grate. NOAH adjusts the gain. ARI carries SAM's gloves and the thermos lid.

Sound. *Pressure through stone, a quiet metallic vibration and meltwater below the path.*

SAM

Listen.

ARI listens. NOAH checks the level but leaves both the loud and quiet versions with SAM. On the return loop, NOAH takes the earlier school session. Back home, NOAH moves it to HAS A DATE and types NOAH ATTENDING. ARI watches without touching the phone.

Transition

The following week. At 16:25, the utility site's test window closes. NOAH opens NEXT / NOT DONE before the client representative can begin another question.

CAN BE DONE NOW shows BUY WATERPROOF POUCH FOR CITY LAB. N. A photograph from LENA shows clear roll-top plastic large enough for recorder and notebook.

NOAH

I need to leave at four thirty-five.

MALIK

Anything open?

NOAH

The trace is clean. The client has the review copy.
Jules has the unresolved list.

JULES

All four items.

MALIK

Tomorrow at eight?

NOAH

Yes.

NOAH enters LEAVING 16:35 in the calendar. At the station shop, NOAH rejects a pouch with a folded seam, takes the second, and adds a separate memory card. On the bus the line moves to DONE: BOUGHT POUCH + SEPARATE MEMORY CARD. IN WORK BAG.

Transition

Home. ARI stands at the table in work clothes between two catalogue versions. SAM cuts an apple. NOAH places the pouch and memory card beside ARI's pages.

NOAH

I bought the City Lab pouch. And a memory card.

ARI

You did?

SAM

Can I put the Table Ear in it?

NOAH

Cable first. Do not force the connector.

SAM packs the recorder, notebook, microphone and cable. Everything fits. NOAH checks the headphones, restores the volume limit and moves that line to DONE.

ARI

You did that too?

NOAH

It was there.

ARI

I had forgotten it was there.

ARI turns the empty pouch in the light.

ARI

Did you get labels? Every item needs a name and participant number.

NOAH

We have permanent marker.

ARI

It rubs off flexible plastic. The office has outdoor stock. I can print one.

NOAH

Then do that.

The shortness lands. NOAH reopens the note and moves the pouch out of DONE. Adds ARI PRINT LABEL. NOAH FORMAT CARD.

ARI

You do not have to move it back. The buying is done.

NOAH

The item says pouch.

ARI

The item could say buy pouch.

SAM

It is currently a bag. Tomorrow it will have an identity.

NOAH

A difficult transition.

Transition

Next evening. ARI brings two waterproof labels. NOAH cleans the plastic. SAM chooses the lower corner so the recorder remains visible. The label goes where SAM points.

ARI

The buying was done yesterday.

NOAH

Yes.

ARI

And this part is done now.

NOAH

Yes.

NOAH moves the line to DONE without changing it again. SAM holds the transparent pouch toward the light.

SAM

It has an identity.

Transition

Friday, 16:25. NOAH compares the household's real electricity use with fixed and variable contracts. A client representative enters at 16:28. NOAH raises one finger, saves the comparison and adds the recommendation to the note before turning back to work.

On the bus, ARI reacts with a check mark. At home, the comparison is open between them.

ARI

You included the fixed-fee difference.

NOAH

It is the only part that changes the result at our use level.

ARI

I would choose the eighteen-month contract.

NOAH

Me too.

NOAH completes the renewal and moves the line to DONE. ARI's hand rests on the back of NOAH's neck. NOAH leans into it. The line remains where NOAH placed it.

Scene 10

WHAT COUNTS AS DONE

A Wednesday. NOAH's phone cannot reach through the control-room walls. On the watch, one line appears from LENA: FOLLOWING OUR REVIEW OF INDEPENDENT TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS. At lunch, the full message is in NEXT / NOT DONE beneath NOBODY KNOWS WHAT THIS MEANS.

Message - ARI to HOUSEHOLD NOTE

Lena asks whether Sam may leave independently after off-site sessions. Need answer Friday. I think yes from centre, no from changing sites?

Message - NOAH to ARI

Can you forward the original? I will answer Lena.

Screenshots appear. Three institutional options; five sites; one treatment plant without a regular bus. NOAH drafts and places the text in the note.

Message - NOAH to CITY LAB DRAFT

Sam may travel independently to and from listed sites. Please let us know if a session ends somewhere not included in the schedule. Sending at 16:30 unless objection.

At 16:25 there is no objection. NOAH sends. At 16:27 the phone rings.

ARI

Did you send the City Lab answer?

NOAH

Two minutes ago.

ARI

Option one can include the treatment plant. There is no ordinary route.

NOAH

All right.

ARI

Can you clarify: centre and river museum independent; elsewhere Sam stays with the group until we confirm?

NOAH

I will send it.

NOAH writes. ARI changes one sentence in the shared note. NOAH accepts the edit and sends.

Message - LENA to ARI AND NOAH

Thank you, that is clear. We will mark centre and river museum as independent departure locations and ask for confirmation elsewhere.

NOAH moves the line to DONE. The practical question closes. The message history remains visible.

Transition

Home. ARI makes toast. SAM is still at City Lab.

NOAH

Lena answered. It is fixed.

ARI

I saw. I am sorry I called immediately. I could have written it in the note.

NOAH

Calling was faster.

ARI

I was glad you answered it. I changed one part because of the treatment plant. The rest was yours.

NOAH

Next time I will wait longer.

ARI

That is not what I want. I want you to answer without waiting for me.

NOAH

This time waiting would have helped.

The toaster releases two slices. ARI gives one to NOAH. Neither finds a sentence larger than the toast.

NOAH

It is solved.

Transition

A compressed sequence of January. The note receives a school platform question before they leave the information evening. ARI arrives home to a paid City Lab invoice and does not open the platform. NOAH and SAM make blind recordings of batteries, a key, a train ticket and a ceramic bird through the Table Ear.

Sound. *Small objects conducted through the long table: dry impacts, a scrape, a heavy insect-like knock.*

SAM

Ceramic bird.

ARI

I said key.

NOAH

You have invalidated the experiment through attribution.

ARI

All perception uses available information.

*The household misplaces a glove. A cup of tea goes cold.
Nothing becomes a crisis because the unresolved items remain outside any one person's immediate attention.*

Transition

*Friday afternoon. At the long table, NOAH and SAM complete the residential consent form. Two files appear:
FORM RECEIPT and EQUIPMENT LOAN AGREEMENT.*

SAM

Why not call them form and equipment?

NOAH

Because in three months there will be twelve files called form.

SAM

Then the system is badly designed.

NOAH

The system is us.

NOAH saves both files, updates HANA's number, chooses the loan recorder and moves RESIDENTIAL CONSENT FORM to DONE. Later, ARI reads the green check while NOAH cuts onions.

ARI

When do we pay the equipment deposit?

NOAH

When they send the invoice.

ARI

Did you put it in waiting?

NOAH

No. The form is done.

ARI

I know the form is done. I am asking about what follows from choosing the loan.

NOAH

An invoice follows.

ARI

Which we need to notice.

NOAH adds a new line beneath WAITING FOR SOMEONE ELSE: CITY LAB EQUIPMENT DEPOSIT INVOICE - LOAN SELECTED. The consent form remains under DONE.

SAM

Listen. The radiator stopping.

Sound. *Clicks, then a long contraction through metal.*

ARI

It sounds final.

SAM

It starts again later.

Transition

Another Friday, 16:25. The invoice arrives. NOAH checks the amount, pays, attaches the receipt and moves only the invoice line to DONE. At home, ARI sees it.

ARI

That was fast.

NOAH

It was actionable.

ARI

And now it is done. The invoice.

NOAH

Yes.

They smile. NOAH then places a concert listing on the table. MIRA's conditional agreement for SAM is already in the note.

NOAH

March twentieth.

ARI

You have not bought them?

NOAH

They were reversible.

ARI

That is not the same as unbought.

NOAH

It is the Noah definition of unbought. Do you want to go?

ARI looks at the band name. The answer begins in ARI's face before the calendar opens.

ARI

Yes.

NOAH

Then I bought them.

ARI

Put it in the calendar.

NOAH enters the concert between a City Lab Saturday and ARI's publication-review week. MIRA's arrangement remains beside it under HAS A DATE.

NOAH

Not done.

ARI

Not yet.

Scene 11

PICKUP

The long table divides into three live zones: ARI's publication meeting, NOAH's utility-site route and the museum courtyard where SAM's session will end. A shared digital note is visible above all three.

CITY LAB - VOICE

Due to weather and access restrictions, today's river session will finish at the museum courtyard at 17:10. Participants with independent-departure permission may leave from the museum. Others must be collected there.

12:43. ARI reads beneath the meeting table. The note already says FRIDAY CITY LAB MUSEUM 16:45 - NOAH COLLECT + CABLE SHOP. ARI changes the finish time.

Message - ARI to HOUSEHOLD NOTE

Changed finish 17:10 museum.

Message - NOAH to HOUSEHOLD NOTE

Thumbs-up reaction.

15:30.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Review on schedule. I have pickup.

Message - ARI to NOAH

Good. Staff briefing until 17:00.

Transition

16:11. The utility-site review releases NOAH. JULES packs the test notes. NOAH opens the route map.

JULES

Route?

NOAH

Eight is cancelled.

JULES

Taxi?

NOAH

Tram from south gate.

JULES

That is a long walk.

NOAH

Twelve minutes.

NOAH leaves the file boxes with security. Sideways sleet. A delivery truck blocks the pedestrian exit. NOAH crosses the wet verge and reaches the tram as the warning sounds. The doors close. The phone loses signal.

Sound. *Tram doors. The route map disappears.*

16:15. ARI enters the fixed briefing room and places the phone face down. A chart shows publication, translation, access review, approval and release in connected boxes.

INSTRUCTOR

What if the change is only one sentence?

ARI

The number of sentences does not determine the number of dependencies.

16:32. The phone vibrates. ARI does not turn it over. 16:40. A second vibration. ARI waits for the slide to change.

TRANSPORT APPLICATION - VOICE

Route 8 disruption. Service cancelled between Utility Park and Central Station.

CITY LAB - VOICE

Pickup 17:10. Museum Courtyard.

No message from NOAH. ARI opens alternatives beneath the table: replacement bus too late; south tram possible if every connection holds. On NOAH's side, the tram runs. ARI cannot see it.

Message - HANA to ARI

I am near the museum today. Do you still need backup for anything?

16:47. ARI does not answer. RUTH asks for the escalation path. ARI returns to the chart.

ARI

The question is not whether the individual change appears small. The question is what dependencies it alters.

16:52. ARI checks the note. No change. 16:54.

Message - ARI to NOAH

Saw route 8 cancelled. Are you on the tram route?

No answer. 17:00. The briefing ends. Two colleagues remain. ARI directs their questions into the new process. 17:02. ARI calls. Voicemail. Then HANA receives a message.

Message - ARI to HANA

Can you be at museum courtyard at 17:10 if Noah is delayed? Sam may leave alone, so not urgent. I am checking.

Message - HANA to ARI

Yes. I am five minutes away. Tell me by 17:07.

17:04. NOAH steps from bus 3 outside the museum. Signal returns beneath the awning. ARI's question and missed call arrive together.

Message - NOAH to ARI

At museum from south tram. Phone was in site locker. All good.

17:06. SAM packs the recorder rather than searching the courtyard. NOAH signs the departure sheet.

LENA

The group could have waited. Sam has independent permission.

NOAH

I know.

NOAH and SAM cross to the electronics shop. SAM tests two cables and chooses the more flexible one. 17:12.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Collected 17:06. Cable shop next.

ARI reads the first message twice, cancels HANA and then receives the photograph of SAM beneath the awning. The note line moves to DONE. ARI's shoulders do not lower.

Transition

ARI leaves by the rear stairs and walks the longer way to the bus. At a crossing, the signal changes. ARI moves only when another pedestrian steps forward. On the bus, the phone remains pressed against one thigh.

Transition

18:20. Home. SAM connects the new cable at the long table. NOAH makes soup. ARI enters with sleet on the coat.

SAM

The drain under the museum sounds like a ship.

ARI

A large ship or a small ship?

SAM

A ship heard from inside another ship.

ARI

Clear.

NOAH

How was the briefing?

ARI

Finished.

NOAH

That is not how it was.

ARI

It was fine. People asked predictable questions.

ARI places the phone in the key bowl. NOAH stirs the soup.

NOAH

The route cancellation was badly timed. I took the tram from the south gate. My phone was in the locker during the review.

ARI

I know.

NOAH stops stirring. ARI hears the repetition.

ARI

Hana was nearby. I asked whether she could cover if you were delayed.

NOAH

Why?

ARI

Route 8 was cancelled and I could not reach you.

NOAH

Sam had independent permission. And I had pickup.

ARI

I knew you had pickup.

NOAH

Then what was Hana covering?

ARI

The possibility that you could not get there and Sam expected you.

SAM looks up from the cable.

SAM

I would have waited ten minutes and then messaged.
Lena said the group would stay inside until everyone
left.

NOAH

Were you worried?

SAM

No.

SAM returns to the connector. NOAH lowers the heat.

NOAH

I arrived early. I found another route. You asked
Hana before the pickup time even though Sam could
leave and I had confirmed the task.

ARI

I cancelled Hana as soon as you answered.

The soup begins to move against the side of the pot.

NOAH

It is ready.

*They eat. SAM plays the museum drain. NOAH asks about
microphone position. ARI asks whether sleet reached the
recorder. SAM answers both. The replacement cable remains
coiled beside the bowl.*

Transition

*After SAM goes to bed. NOAH opens NEXT / NOT
DONE. The pickup line is under DONE. The full
message history remains beneath it.*

NOAH

I am trying to understand what the note was sup-
posed to prevent.

ARI

Not tonight.

NOAH

I am not starting an argument. I am asking what information would have been enough.

ARI looks at the acknowledged change, the confirmation, the unanswered route question and the arrival message.

ARI

You got there.

NOAH places the phone face down.

NOAH

Yes. I did.

Scene 12

FIVE MINUTES / THE WORDS

Early morning. NOAH's wet sock hangs stiff beside the radiator. ARI's coat remains over a chair; the scarf is folded too exactly. The pickup history is open on NOAH's phone. ARI enters in the old grey sweater. NOAH pours two coffees. They remain standing.

NOAH

I do not want to restart last night. I want to understand it.

ARI

That sounds similar.

NOAH

I saw the cancellation at four eleven. I took the south tram, reached the museum at five-oh-four and collected Sam at five-oh-six.

ARI

I know what happened. I did not know it while it was happening.

NOAH

There were five minutes. Sam could leave and everyone could wait inside.

ARI

That is not the five minutes I am talking about.

NOAH

You mean the time before you knew.

ARI

Yes.

NOAH

I cannot make information arrive before I have my phone.

ARI

Tell me when you see the change.

NOAH

I was solving the route.

ARI

You were solving the route. I was still holding the pickup.

NOAH looks at the message history again.

NOAH

I see that not knowing continued for you while I was moving.

ARI

That is the part I need you to carry.

NOAH

I had the pickup.

ARI

You had the action.

NOAH

That was the agreement.

ARI

Was it?

SAM enters wearing one sock and carrying the other.

SAM

Why are you both in the kitchen? Are we late?

ARI

No.

SAM

Good. I need the recorder card.

NOAH

It is in the waterproof-labelled pouch.

ARI almost smiles. The morning continues.

Transition

At work, JULES asks for the replacement route for a late-shift review. NOAH sends the saved disruption notice and explains the south-gate tram.

JULES

Good recovery.

NOAH

I crossed the yard, caught the tram and reached Sam. Ari opened another route while mine was invisible. We both recovered the same pickup, each inside different minutes, without seeing the other.

NOAH opens NEXT / NOT DONE. The next line asks whether SAM's residential sleeping bag still fits. NOAH adds N.

Message - NOAH to ARI

I will check sleeping bag tonight. Home 18:10.

Message - ARI to NOAH

Received.

Transition

Three days later. ARI and NOAH walk beside the river toward the larger supermarket. SAM is with MIRA and DANIEL recording the power hall.

ARI

I am asking for the point where a change becomes yours to communicate, not only yours to solve.

NOAH

What is the point?

ARI

When the route you told me no longer exists.

NOAH

Even if I already have another route.

ARI

Especially then. Because I cannot know you have another route.

NOAH

Route changes get a message.

ARI

Not only routes. Anything that changes the dependency.

NOAH

Which dependencies?

ARI

That is what I am trying to explain.

At the self-checkout, the coffee is rejected twice. NOAH scans it again.

SELF-CHECKOUT - VOICE

Assistance is coming.

ARI

It has created a dependency.

NOAH

I will communicate if the attendant changes route.

ARI laughs. The attendant corrects the price. NOAH moves the oranges before the coffee can bruise them.

Transition

Home. Groceries cover the long table. ARI places the coffee in NOAH's cupboard. NOAH washes the oranges.

Flour, rice and pasta wait to be stored.

ARI

I need the update before the uncertainty begins to require action.

NOAH

I cannot always know when uncertainty begins for you. I need a rule I can follow.

ARI

The state is caused by missing information.

NOAH

Sometimes you start solving before anything has changed.

ARI

Because there may not be time when it does.

NOAH

There was time on Friday.

ARI

We are not discussing Friday.

NOAH

Then what are we discussing?

ARI

The pattern.

NOAH

A pattern made of events we are not discussing.

*ARI pushes paper bags into the recycling drawer. They catch.
ARI folds them smaller.*

ARI

When I give examples, you answer the examples.
When I do not, you say the pattern is not specific.

NOAH

Because I cannot answer a pattern that changes depending on what it needs to prove.

ARI

I am trying to stop carrying every unfinished possibility.

NOAH

Every? I handled the pickup, the recorder, the consent form, the electricity contract, the cable, the school evening.

ARI

I know. I am not saying you do nothing.

NOAH

You keep saying that as if it is the generous version of what you mean.

SAM's recorder case, the charger and the waterproof labels remain on the table.

ARI

The work is knowing something may need to be done before it becomes a task. Knowing what depends on it, when waiting stops being neutral and what the backup is.

NOAH

You are describing a difference and treating it as a failure I could prevent if I cared enough.

ARI

I have not said you do not care.

NOAH

Not in those words. There is always a larger interval, another dependency, something that means the task was not really mine even when I did it.

ARI

I need you to understand what it costs before the outcome.

NOAH

I do. The outcome also tells us whether the response was proportionate. I think you acted before you knew you needed to.

ARI

That is what preparation is.

NOAH

Sometimes it is control.

The word remains between them.

ARI

You think I enjoy checking routes and building back-ups?

NOAH

No. Wanting control and using control are not the same thing.

ARI

You are being selfish. You are protecting whether your actions count instead of looking at what the uncertainty does to me.

NOAH

And you are controlling - in the way you make the field larger until your response is the only reasonable one.

ARI turns to the groceries. The rice is where the pasta belongs. ARI moves it.

NOAH

I know that hurt.

ARI

Then do not say it.

NOAH

You called me selfish.

ARI

After you called me controlling.

NOAH

You knew what selfish would mean.

Neither reaches for another example.

ARI

I am sorry I called you selfish.

NOAH

I am sorry I called you controlling.

NOAH makes coffee with the new beans. ARI cuts the oranges. They sit at opposite sides of the long table and eat from the same plate.

ARI

I do not think you are a selfish person.

NOAH

I know.

NOAH

I do not think you are a controlling person.

ARI

I know.

They put away the groceries. ARI has bought the good coffee. NOAH has replaced the sticking drawer runner. HANA returns with SAM.

SAM

We tested the waterproof bag in a puddle.

ARI

With the recorder inside?

NOAH

No.

SAM

With paper.

ARI

Good test design.

NOAH hangs the wet bag over the sink. ARI's hand touches NOAH's. The contact remains for one breath.

Transition

Night. ARI asks what time NOAH will be home next Thursday. NOAH points to yesterday's longer message. ARI finds it.

Message - ARI to NOAH
You are right.

They come to bed at different times. The hall light remains on; a line of light divides the room. NOAH moves toward the wall to make space.

NOAH

Do you want it off?

ARI

In a minute.

Neither sleeps. NOAH reaches across the space but does not yet touch.

NOAH

I know the uncertainty is real for you.

ARI

I know completion is real for you.

NOAH's open hand remains between them. ARI takes it. With the other hand, ARI turns off the hall light.

Interval

ACT II

MOVEMENT IV

OTHER FORMS OF EASE

Scene 13

LESS ASKED / SIMPLE

Tuesday afternoon. The long table remains visible but dim. In a narrow work zone, NOAH stands between project calls. DANIEL'S invitation appears.

Message - DANIEL to NOAH

Four seats at the old power hall on Friday. Two performers you like. Do you and Ari want the other two?

NOAH opens the household calendar. A grey block reads POSSIBLE CATALOGUE CATCH-UP, 17:00–19:00. NOAH begins a message to ARI.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Daniel has tickets Friday. Want to go?

The message remains unsent. NOAH looks from the project schedule to the City Lab return, then deletes it.

Message - NOAH to DANIEL

I cannot promise Friday. Give the seats to someone else.

DANIEL answers with a disappointed face and a photograph of the poster. NOAH saves the photograph.

Transition

A week later. Shower water behind the apartment wall. ARI is offstage. NOAH reads another invitation beside the bowl of keys.

Message - FORMER COLLEAGUE to NOAH

Repair workshop opening Saturday. Coffee, tools, no ceremony. Come if you can.

NOAH opens Saturday: residential-equipment orientation, Sam's station recording, food, travel. The repair workshop itself is represented by a small task lamp over an empty tool bench. NOAH does not turn it on.

Message - NOAH to FORMER COLLEAGUE

Congratulations. I cannot make Saturday, but I hope it goes well.

Transition

Saturday. ARI and SAM return with the recorder and a station map. NOAH has repaired the radiator valve and made lentil stew. The tool bench remains dark.

NOAH

You ate?

ARI

With Sam.

NOAH

How was equipment return?

ARI

Done. Sam remembered the pouch without me asking.

NOAH

Good.

ARI opens catalogue pages at the long table. NOAH warms the stew. SAM edits tram brakes and footsteps through headphones.

NOAH

I thought catch-up was Friday.

ARI

It is. This is the version Ruth needs tomorrow.

NOAH

Do you want tea?

ARI

Yes.

NOAH makes tea. The power-hall poster and workshop message remain unseen by ARI.

Transition

The following weeks pass through short, complete actions.

NOAH cooks on Wednesday. ARI dries site gloves.

NOAH repairs the balcony latch. ARI orders filters.

Messages become shorter; the note becomes cleaner.

ARI enters with a headache and places the keys directly in the bowl. NOAH sees the movement.

NOAH

Dark room?

ARI

Please.

NOAH closes the curtains and lowers the kitchen light. SAM puts on headphones. ARI lies on the sofa with a folded cloth over the eyes. NOAH brings plain rice.

NOAH

You do not have to eat. But it is here.

ARI touches NOAH'S wrist. Later ARI covers NOAH, asleep in the armchair. A glass of water appears beside the empty bowl.

Transition

A mild Saturday at the river. SAM records bicycle bells and old ice. A notice at the footbridge advertises a projection in the old print hall beginning in forty minutes. All three read it.

SAM

That might have good machine sounds.

NOAH

It might.

No one asks whether the evening can change. They continue home. The projection notice goes dark behind them.

Transition

Work. A control cabinet. JULES writes four headings on a whiteboard: SENSOR TIMING. SUPPLIER FILE. CLIENT APPROVAL. SATURDAY ACCESS. MALIK places coffee beside the board.

JULES

The sensor timing is ours. The supplier file is theirs. Client approval is Malik. Saturday access is mine until security answers.

JULES

What remains unknown?

NOAH

Whether the delay is in the relay or the controller instruction.

JULES

What do you need?

NOAH

Forty minutes without another restart.

MALIK stops the client representative from restarting. The room quiets. NOAH changes the sampling interval. The fault moves.

NOAH

Controller instruction.

JULES crosses out RELAY and writes INSTRUCTION. NOAH corrects the instruction. The sensor sequence completes. JULES writes DONE.

JULES

What?

NOAH

Nothing.

JULES

That was not nothing.

NOAH

The word has a complicated private life.

JULES

Does it owe money?

NOAH

Mostly explanations.

JULES

Then it is like every project.

Transition

Later. A supplier file lacks two pages. JULES prints them without defending the first completion. Security denies access because the room number is wrong. JULES makes the call while NOAH waits with bad coffee.

JULES

This is not simple.

NOAH

No.

JULES

It is merely narrow.

NOAH

Narrow helps.

JULES

Until the narrow thing blocks everything.

Transition

Home. ARI cuts carrots. SAM maps river sounds through headphones. NOAH enters with the site bag.

ARI

How bad?

NOAH

Intense.

ARI

Still behind?

NOAH

Less behind.

ARI pushes the bowl of cut carrots towards NOAH.

ARI

Eat one before you become impossible.

NOAH eats one. SAM asks about the failed sound. NOAH explains that the fault was timing. ARI adds onions to the pan.

ARI

Jules still on it?

NOAH

Yes.

ARI

Are they useful?

NOAH

Very.

NOAH mentions JULES'S dog and the swallowed cloth toy.

ARI

Was Jules worried?

NOAH

Yes.

ARI

Did they say?

NOAH

They did not need to.

ARI stops cutting. NOAH reaches for the bread.

NOAH

It is intense, but somehow simple.

ARI

Simple how?

NOAH

Everyone says what they need.

ARI

I say what I need.

NOAH

I did not say you do not.

ARI

You said it was simple because everyone says what they need.

NOAH

At work.

ARI

As opposed to where?

NOAH sets the bread basket down. SAM turns the headphone volume up.

NOAH

As opposed to projects where people hide problems until the deadline.

ARI

Right.

During dinner JULES sends a photograph of the whiteboard. One heading remains open. Under it: SUPPLIER REVISION HISTORY – NOT OURS TO INVENT. NOAH shows SAM.

SAM

The handwriting looks angry.

NOAH

It is organised anger.

ARI

That sentence is useful.

NOAH

Which one?

ARI

Not ours to invent.

The meal continues. Afterward, NOAH washes the pan while ARI dries.

NOAH

I was not comparing you to Jules.

ARI

I know.

NOAH

The project is simpler because the relationships are narrower.

ARI

That is still a comparison.

NOAH

It is a difference.

ARI

Differences are what comparisons are made of.

NOAH

I am not imagining another life.

ARI

I did not say you were.

NOAH

Then let us not make it larger.

ARI

Fine.

They finish the kitchen in silence. In bed, neither asks whether the other is awake. The radiator clicks once and stops.

Scene 14

THE RESIDENTIAL LIST / THE APARTMENT

Monday morning. A meeting room waits. ARI'S phone lights with the subject CITY LAB RESIDENTIAL: FINAL INFORMATION AND PREPARATION LIST. Seven attachment icons appear. ARI reads the subject and locks the screen.

At lunch, the shared note is projected. NOAH has added: CITY LAB RESIDENTIAL – FINAL LIST RECEIVED. NOAH. Beneath it: READ ATTACHMENTS TONIGHT. ARI closes the note.

Transition

Home. Seven sheets cross the long table: travel, food, equipment, medication, sleeping, emergency contact and return. NOAH reads; SAM tests a sleeping bag on the floor. ARI works at the far end of the table and does not take a sheet.

SAM

My feet are compressed.

NOAH

Daniel has confused possession with suitability.

NOAH calls MIRA from the floor.

MIRA - PHONE - VOICE

Daniel has been told the bag is too short. I have the longer one.

NOAH

Wednesday?

MIRA - PHONE - VOICE

Wednesday.

NOAH adds collection to the note. On Wednesday, SAM packs the day bag: three notebooks, two packets of cards, no spare socks and the Table Ear cable without the microphone. NOAH does not touch the bag.

NOAH

Talk me through the day.

SAM moves through departure, lunch, field recording, dinner, evening activity, sleeping, breakfast and return. At FIELD RECORDING, SAM finds the missing microphone. At SLEEPING, SAM finds the missing socks. SAM repacks.

SAM

That was manipulative teaching.

NOAH

It was sequence-based discovery.

SAM

Ari would call it a dependency map.

NOAH

Do not make it ideological.

NOAH labels the charger, checks the recorder battery, saves the corrected emergency number and places the signed equipment form in the front pocket. ARI passes waterproof trousers in a shop window and continues walking. At home the completed bag stands by the door.

Transition

Friday evening. NOAH enters the kitchen with the printed list.

NOAH

Do you know whether the power bank is allowed on the bus?

ARI

Why?

NOAH

The equipment page says spare batteries must be in hand luggage. It does not mention power banks.

ARI reads the line.

ARI

Power units means power banks. It says day bag. Put it in the day bag.

NOAH

That was my reading.

ARI

Why are you asking me?

NOAH

Because you read institutional language faster.

NOAH puts the power bank into the side pocket. ARI follows into the hallway.

ARI

Did you check whether the emergency number is saved in Sam's phone?

NOAH

Yes.

ARI

And the return location?

NOAH

Yes.

ARI

The north entrance is closed to cars on Saturdays.

NOAH

We are taking the bus.

ARI

I know.

NOAH

Anything else?

ARI

No.

NOAH zips the bag.

Transition

Saturday morning. SAM wears the City Lab sweatshirt.

NOAH hands over the day bag.

NOAH

Your responsibility from the door. Recorder?

SAM

Front pocket.

NOAH

Lunch?

SAM

Side pocket.

NOAH

Cards?

SAM

Essential equipment.

At the north entrance LENA receives the form. SAM stores the bag and hugs both parents.

ARI

Record something no one else notices.

SAM

That is the assignment every time.

ARI

Then you are prepared.

The bus leaves. ARI and NOAH remain until it has gone.

ARI

You did all of that.

NOAH

Yes.

ARI

It went well.

NOAH

It did. Breakfast?

ARI

Yes.

At a small cafe, they sit on the same side because a heater blocks the other chair. ARI eats part of NOAH'S toast.

NOAH

You said breakfast.

ARI

This is breakfast.

NOAH

This is theft adjacent to pastry.

Transition

The following evening. SAM remains at the residential weekend. NOAH leaves on the 07:12 train for an overnight inspection. Station light.

NOAH

The hotel is near the river.

ARI

You told me.

NOAH

I may walk if the meeting ends early.

ARI

Send a photograph if there is anything worth seeing.

NOAH

I will send one even if there is not.

NOAH touches ARI'S face with the back of two fingers.

NOAH

Sleep.

ARI

Work.

NOAH

Unfair division.

ARI

Temporary.

NOAH leaves. ARI exits the station before the train departs.

Transition

THE APARTMENT. The following sequence is continuous and unhurried. No blackout separates its actions.

The key turns once. ARI checks the handle, enters and places the keys in the almost-blue bowl on the first attempt. No shoes block the hallway. SAM'S headphones hang from the bedpost.

Sound. *The refrigerator starts. Water moves through a pipe. A bus releases its brakes outside. A chair crosses courtyard stone. None of these sounds is underlined by music.*

ARI opens the windows for three minutes, closes them and makes packet soup with less water than instructed. Bread is cut directly on the counter. ARI eats first standing, then on the sofa. One plate remains beside the sink. ARI notices it and leaves it.

The work laptop opens to three paragraphs and one unresolved sentence. ARI reads once, closes it, lies on the living-room floor and starts an old radio documentary. Wind crosses an abandoned coastal microphone.

Message - LEA to ARI

Are you free for a call?

Message - ARI to LEA

Tomorrow? Having a quiet evening.

LEA answers with a thumbs-up. ARI leaves the phone in the bowl. A shower runs too hot. A towel remains on the bath-room floor. ARI steps over it twice. The alcove light remains on.

ARI

The plate can stay beside the sink. The towel can stay on the floor. Nothing opens behind them. The evening does not become recovered capacity; it is only mine while it lasts. No one is due at the door. There is no second schedule, and every object ends where I leave it.

ARI presses down the lid of NOAH'S obsolete-cable box. A thick adapter rises again. ARI releases it. The old photography notebook opens to a list of empty rooms. The camera battery is low; NOAH'S label identifies the charger.

Transition

Without leaving the continuous sequence, the room becomes the industrial district and station through reflected glass, a bench, a paper cup and the automatic light at the adult-education entrance. ARI photographs spaces after movement. No faces. The automatic lights come on when ARI stands too close; ARI waits until they go out and takes the photograph.

At nine, the phone vibrates in ARI'S coat.

NOAH

You are outside.

ARI

Good diagnostic work.

NOAH

Where?

ARI

Near the old print hall.

NOAH

At nine?

ARI

I took the camera.

NOAH

The real camera?

ARI

It still exists.

NOAH

Did the battery still exist?

ARI

You labelled the charger.

NOAH

That was for future civilisation.

*They laugh. NOAH describes a train losing power and
JULES pressing an illuminated door button by accident. ARI
describes the dark municipal room.*

NOAH

Did you eat?

ARI

Soup.

NOAH

Made or surrendered?

ARI

Modified surrender.

NOAH

Acceptable. Sleep.

ARI

You too.

NOAH

Call if anything happens.

ARI

Nothing is going to happen.

NOAH

That is not how future events work.

ARI

Goodnight.

NOAH

Goodnight.

Back in the apartment, ARI ends the call and returns the phone to the bowl. The plate, towel and alcove light remain. ARI reviews the photographs without adjusting them, closes the camera display and goes to bed.

Transition

Morning. ARI wakes with one arm across NOAH'S side of the bed. At the long table, ARI exports the dark room photograph.

Message - NOAH to ARI

Room still waiting. Train not. Two minutes early.

ARI pours a second coffee into a flask, clears one place at the long table and does not go to the station. At 09:58 the key turns. NOAH enters with a warm paper packet.

ARI

You are early.

NOAH

Two minutes.

ARI

Within tolerance.

NOAH

Breakfast from the station. Show me.

ARI opens the photograph. NOAH stands behind the chair with one hand on ARI'S shoulder.

NOAH

That one.

ARI

Why?

NOAH

It looks like the room is waiting without being impatient.

ARI

That is not a visual property.

NOAH

Then your methodology is corrupt.

They laugh and eat. Later SAM returns with wet fabric, smoke and several accounts of mud. The apartment fills with bags and recordings. ARI moves the camera to make room.

MOVEMENT V

ANOTHER THURSDAY

Scene 15

MALIK'S QUESTION / SIX WEEKS

A control-room display shows six green fields. For eleven seconds no one moves. Then an operator raises a thumb through the glass. A chair rolls back and strikes the wall.

MALIK

That is a pass.

JULES caps the marker. NOAH saves the test log to two locations and waits for the second progress bar. MALIK touches NOAH'S shoulder.

MALIK

Do not leave before we speak.

NOAH

About the report?

MALIK

Not the report.

Transition

Outside the site. A railway sings behind the fence before a train appears. MALIK gives NOAH coffee.

MALIK

The regional programme is moving to implementation phase. Three sites after this one. I want you to lead the trial phase.

NOAH

Lead what exactly?

MALIK

That is the correct first question.

NOAH

It is not acceptance.

MALIK

I know.

MALIK places a one-page role outline between them. As the terms are named, they appear on the page: THREE MONTHS. TWO OVERNIGHTS EVERY SECOND WEEK. TECHNICAL HANDOVER. LOCAL SEQUENCING. SUPPLIER COORDINATION. SIX-WEEK REVIEW.

MALIK

You will not become responsible for every tool, cable and late delivery simply because you can fix them.

NOAH

That last part is aspirational.

MALIK

It is a condition of the trial.

NOAH

Whose condition?

MALIK

Mine, if you take the role. Yours, if you keep it.

NOAH looks through the fence at the control building. The role outline remains folded, not accepted.

NOAH

When do you need an answer?

MALIK

Monday.

NOAH

Start date?

MALIK

Second Monday in June. Orientation the Friday before.

NOAH

Travel booked by the company?

MALIK

Yes. Emergency contact only after nineteen. I am putting that in writing.

NOAH

Who covers this site if the next one fails?

MALIK

Not you by default.

MALIK gives NOAH the page.

MALIK

Take it home. Do not answer from the car park.

NOAH

I was not going to.

MALIK

You are allowed to want it before you know whether it works.

Transition

On the train. JULES sits across the aisle. NOAH has already sent ARI the test result, the delayed train and the fact that MALIK offered something wanted but not bad. ARI has replied: WE CAN TALK AT HOME.

JULES

Do you want it?

NOAH

Yes.

JULES

Then the remaining question is not whether you want it.

NOAH

There are several remaining questions.

NOAH opens the household calendar, sees City Lab, Ari's launch week and a school meeting, then closes it without changing anything. Four lines appear on the phone without a heading: CITY LAB TUESDAY. LAUNCH WEEK. SCHOOL MEETING FRIDAY. HOW OFTEN HANA IS ACTUALLY AVAILABLE.

JULES

Do not arrive home having solved everyone's answer. It will make the offer look like a decision you are presenting for approval.

NOAH

I know.

JULES

Do you?

NOAH

Yes.

JULES

Then I have completed my unwanted contribution.

Transition

Home. SAM plays three recordings of the same door closing. NOAH enters at 19:11 and places the keys in the bowl.

SAM

The hinge is not the sound. The room is the sound.

NOAH

The hinge has no professional identity.

SAM

Listen.

Sound. *Three door closures: a click; a hollow wooden note; a vibration continuing after the latch.*

NOAH

Third.

SAM

Why?

NOAH

It keeps changing after the action is finished.

ARI

Test passed?

NOAH

Passed.

ARI embraces NOAH. NOAH holds ARI, one hand between the shoulder blades. The passed test has its own interval: transfer, sensor history, JULES finding the numbered attachment, SAM asking whether green fields make a sound. Only then does NOAH place the folded page on the table.

NOAH

Malik offered me the trial lead for the next phase.

ARI

That is the something. Do you want it?

NOAH

Yes.

ARI

Tell me.

NOAH gives the terms. ARI opens June in the calendar.

ARI

The first Monday is Sam's school-transition meeting.

NOAH

The role starts after it. Orientation is the Friday before.

ARI

The Friday is the planning meeting with the new instructors.

NOAH

What time?

ARI

Until four. The school meeting is five fifteen.

NOAH

I can attend the school meeting.

ARI

If orientation ends when it says.

NOAH

It ends at three. Main office.

ARI

Then yes.

SAM removes the headphones.

SAM

Are you going to be a boss?

NOAH

Temporarily responsible for people who do not like
the word boss.

SAM

Can I have the old pressure sensor?

NOAH

No.

SAM

Then authority has changed you.

*SAM returns to the door recordings. ARI reaches the first
travel Tuesday.*

ARI

Final City Lab session. I cannot leave before five
thirty.

NOAH

Hana?

ARI

Possibly. We have not asked.

NOAH

I can ask.

ARI sets the phone down but leaves June visible.

ARI

I am not looking for a reason to say no.

NOAH

I know.

ARI

I do not think you did. I am trying to see what the role is before we build the household around it. What do you want to do in it?

NOAH speaks without the role outline: first meetings at a site; local engineers able to refuse inherited assumptions; authority to stop a test before the room is committed; training that does not depend on NOAH'S memory. ARI listens without opening another date.

ARI

That sounds like your work.

NOAH

It is.

ARI

Not only work you can do.

NOAH

No.

ARI

Congratulations.

NOAH

Thank you.

Later, on the balcony, the role outline rests beside the phone.

NOAH

I do not want tonight to become the full negotiation.

ARI

No.

NOAH

I wanted you to have the facts. And I want the role.

ARI

I know. I want you to have it. That is not the same as saying it works.

NOAH

No.

ARI

But I do want you to have it.

NOAH

Thank you.

NOAH

Tomorrow?

ARI

Tomorrow.

Transition

*The next day. NOAH'S calls occur in separate light.
LENA is heard over chairs scraping in the print hall.*

NOAH

The extended supervised hour. Is it still possible for the final Tuesday?

LENA - PHONE - VOICE

Yes. Forty-eight hours' notice. The fee is per child.
Participants stay in the studio with one staff member.
It is support, not a penalty.

NOAH writes PAID SUPERVISED HOUR, then does not book it yet. In the courtyard, HANA carries grocery bags and tries the wrong bicycle-room key.

NOAH

Alternate Tuesday in June. City Lab pickup at five forty-five. One time definitely, possibly twice if the trial dates move. We would pay you, or trade something useful, or both.

HANA

I can do the first one. The second depends on my rota. Do not pay me. Fix the shelf in my storage room.

NOAH

That shelf is an engineering offence.

HANA

Then justice.

NOAH

One Tuesday. The calendar entry will contain one Tuesday.

HANA

Good.

A storage shelf leans forward, held level by a box of winter shoes. NOAH and HANA choose Saturday morning, the correct wall plugs and one bounded exchange.

Transition

At work, RUTH asks ARI to cover an evening meeting during the second travel week.

RUTH

Can you cover it?

ARI

No.

RUTH

All right.

RUTH leaves with the question. ARI remains with the ease of the refusal, then closes the work folder.

Transition

The long table after dinner. SAM edits in the open living room; bus brakes and metal latches sound intermittently.

ARI brings one blank sheet. NOAH brings the role outline and confirmed travel dates.

NOAH

No new system.

ARI

It is paper.

NOAH

Paper is where systems begin.

ARI

It is where handwriting begins.

ARI writes three headings: FIXED. VARIABLE. REVIEW. Both add items. FIXED receives orientation, school meeting, first overnights, launch week, final City Lab Tuesday and SAM'S presentation. VARIABLE receives later travel, train returns, client calls, HANA'S second pickup, summer hours and SAM'S summer plans. REVIEW remains empty.

NOAH

Six weeks.

ARI

The role outline already says six weeks.

NOAH

That is Malik's review. I want ours.

ARI

What would we review?

NOAH

Not only whether anything was missed. Whether you are carrying the travel weeks before they happen. Whether I am actually unavailable when I am away. Whether Sam knows who is doing what without asking you. Whether we are only solving the visible dates.

ARI

That is a lot for one review.

NOAH

Then it will be a bad meeting.

ARI

We are experienced.

ARI writes SIX WEEKS. SUNDAY, 19:00.

NOAH

If Hana cannot do the second date, we buy Lena's hour.

ARI

Yes.

SAM enters.

SAM

I can stay the extra hour. The studio is quieter after everyone leaves. I do not want Hana every time. Hana asks questions while I am still thinking.

ARI

Would you mind staying?

SAM

No.

ARI writes: SAM PREFERS IF NEEDED. NOAH adds the fee under VARIABLE.

NOAH

One large dish on Monday before each overnight.

ARI

One dish. The other evening can fail normally.

NOAH

Agreed.

NOAH

One Thursday a month. No project work after six unless the site is stopped.

ARI

That is your condition to set with Malik.

NOAH

I know.

ARI

And if something is actually stopped?

NOAH

I say it is an emergency. I do not just become late.

They write it under FIXED.

ARI

I will not hold the travel details in the shared note.

NOAH

Where will they be?

ARI

In the calendar entry you create. Train, hotel, site, emergency number. I will not duplicate them into the note.

NOAH

All right.

ARI

That is not gratitude.

NOAH

It is not supposed to be.

The recorded river under the metal bridge continues beneath traffic.

NOAH

Decision?

ARI

You accept. We use this arrangement.

NOAH

Yes.

Message - NOAH to MALIK

I accept the three-month trial on the conditions in the role outline. Please send the written emergency-contact boundary and confirmed first-six-week travel dates.

NOAH shows the message to ARI.

ARI

It is yours.

NOAH sends. MALIK'S reply arrives: GOOD. FORMAL LETTER MONDAY. BOUNDARIES INCLUDED. CONGRATULATIONS. ARI closes the calendar before coming around the table.

ARI

Congratulations.

ARI kisses NOAH. SAM calls from the living room.

SAM

Do promotions require privacy?

NOAH

Apparently not.

NOAH enters the travel dates, hotel, site, emergency number and written boundary. ARI watches without directing and does not copy them into the shared note. NOAH creates SIX WEEKS – SUNDAY 19:00 and invites ARI. ARI accepts.

Scene 16

WAYS IN / ANOTHER THURSDAY

Saturday morning. The long table holds the recorder case, two cables, batteries, programme cards and three water bottles. SAM holds the black cable and refuses it.

SAM

The blue one crackles if it turns.

NOAH

That is why the black one is the backup.

SAM

The black one changes the level.

NOAH

By less than the hall speakers will.

SAM

Then it is not a backup. It is another version.

NOAH looks at both cables and returns the blue one to the shelf.

NOAH

No backup cable.

SAM packs. NOAH checks only that the case closes. ARI removes one water bottle when SAM says LENA is providing drinks. They leave twenty minutes early because speaker setup belongs to NOAH and programme cards belong to SAM.

Transition

The old print hall. High windows, machine rails in the ceiling, twelve uneven chair rows and the river reflected back into the room. LENA stands with cable around one shoulder.

LENA

The left speaker hums.

NOAH

Does it hum when nothing is connected?

LENA

Yes.

NOAH

Good.

LENA

Why is that good?

NOAH

It reduces the number of things we have to blame.

SAM plays a test file: deep vibration, then metal across stone. NOAH changes the power source. The hum stops.

LENA

I will now describe this as planned maintenance.

MIRA and DANIEL arrive with coffee and pastries. HANA arrives from work. SAM arranges programme cards by

colour. ARI gives LENA the consent sheet and has nothing else to hold. NOAH tapes one cable to the floor, then kneels beside SAM.

SAM

Do not make the bus louder.

NOAH

The bus is currently the loudest event in the known city.

SAM

It needs to arrive from far away.

NOAH

Then the beginning is too high.

SAM adjusts the track. NOAH does not touch the tablet. During another participant's piece, the projector fails. NOAH looks once towards the closed equipment case and remains seated. A print-hall staff member restores the image. SAM waits in the front row without looking back. At the end of the fourth presentation, SAM stands with one programme card and takes the microphone.

SAM

My piece is called Ways In. It is about how places tell you whether you are entering, leaving, waiting, or already too late. Some of the sounds are wrong about what is happening. That is why they are in it.

SAM returns to the tablet. The next sound sequence is continuous, approximately five minutes and ten seconds. No character speaks over it. SAM controls its start and ending.

Sound. *WAYS IN – 0:00–0:25. A key enters a lock without turning. Small internal collisions are close and dry. The sound is captioned KEY ENTERS LOCK.*

Sound. *0:25–1:05. The apartment door closes twice: once firm and immediate; once with a slight pause before the latch. No speaker or visual label identifies whose closure is whose. Caption: TWO DOOR CLOSURES.*

Sound. *1:05–2:25. A bus approaches from far away. Air releases from brakes. The library crossing signal clicks beneath the engine. A station announcement says a train will arrive on platform three while wheels are already passing the microphone. Caption sequence: BUS APPROACHES / CROSSING SIGNAL / DELAYED ANNOUNCEMENT OVER ARRIVING TRAIN.*

Sound. *2:25–3:10. The river enters almost below hearing through the contact microphone against the metal bridge. A bicycle bell sounds once above it. Caption: RIVER THROUGH METAL / BICYCLE BELL.*

Sound. *3:10–3:45. A heavy print-hall door closes. Its vibration continues after the latch. A visible door or vibrating panel provides a non-audio access path. Caption: DOOR LATCHES; VIBRATION CONTINUES.*

Sound. *3:45–4:45. An empty municipal hall: ventilation changes, a light relay clicks, and far away a stack of chairs moves. The room remains visibly between uses. Caption:*

*VENTILATION SHIFTS / LIGHT RELAY / CHAIRS
MOVED AT DISTANCE.*

Sound. *4:45–5:10. The first key returns, enters the lock and turns. The piece ends before the door opens. Caption: KEY TURNS. NO DOOR OPENING.*

The silence after the final turn remains long enough that the ending is uncertain. Then applause fills the hall. SAM continues looking at the tablet until LENA touches SAM'S shoulder. NOAH'S hand rests palm-up between the chairs. ARI places a hand in it.

NOAH

The train was wrong.

ARI

That was the point.

NOAH

I know.

Transition

*After the presentation. Participants compare work.
SAM speaks with the stairwell participant.*

STAIRWELL PARTICIPANT

The station announcement is too clear. I would distort it.

SAM

It has to be clear so it can be wrong. If you distort it, it becomes atmosphere.

LENA gives SAM an envelope with the programme card, a waveform and an equipment-return note. SAM ignores the note and protects the waveform in the recorder case. NOAH coils the speaker cable. ARI brings coffee.

ARI

You carried this.

NOAH

A lot of it.

ARI

Yes.

NOAH

Sam carried the difficult part.

ARI

Also yes.

NOAH takes the coffee. ARI turns back to SAM's equipment. Later, SAM sends LEA the file and returns with a question from the call.

SAM

Lea asked whether the apartment doors were recorded with permission. I asked both of you separately.

NOAH

Did you know which closing was yours?

SAM

Yes.

NOAH

Which?

SAM

That is not part of the piece.

NOAH accepts the boundary. SAM places the loan recorder beside the household recorder.

SAM

Next week I return this one. Then I want to record the bus depot from outside.

At the metal bridge on the long walk home, SAM listens without raising the recorder. City Lab has ended; the practice continues.

Transition

THE INVITATION – under one minute. Tuesday at 11:14. MIRA'S message appears.

Message - MIRA to HOUSEHOLD

Thursday? Dinner here. No occasion. Daniel has bought too many tomatoes and is pretending this is seasonal judgment. Come whenever you can.

NOAH checks Ari's programme close, Sam's school week, Friday orientation, the supplier call and the handover. Nothing has stopped. NOAH types a reply containing I WILL CONFIRM THURSDAY AFTERNOON IF WORK SHIFTS, reads it, removes that clause and sends the shorter message.

Message - NOAH to MIRA

Yes. We can be there around 19:15. We will bring bread.

Message - NOAH to HOUSEHOLD

Mira, Thursday, around 19:15. Bread.

ARI responds with a small heart. The invitation remains still.

Transition

ANOTHER THURSDAY. MIRA and DANIEL'S apartment. Late light, too many tomatoes, bread and the long social table. SAM chooses to bring the small recorder without the contact microphone.

NOAH places one responsible loaf and two orange-almond pastries on the table. DANIEL looks into the bag.

DANIEL

I do not want those.

NOAH

Excellent. Then there are two.

Dinner moves without anyone narrating the previous months. DANIEL'S tomatoes become beans and herbs. NOAH'S bread disappears. ARI refills one glass, then sits before checking the others. SAM sets the tablet on the table.

SAM

Mira wanted the delayed announcement beside the bus. Forty seconds.

SAM starts the excerpt. No one requests the whole piece.

Sound. *SAM-CONTROLLED EXCERPT, approximately forty seconds: key enters lock; bus approaches; the announcement names the wrong platform while the train is already passing; the river enters beneath one bicycle bell. SAM stops the tablet.*

MIRA

It is funnier here.

SAM

It was not meant to be funny.

MIRA

Those are compatible.

SAM considers this. On the balcony, a pigeon attempts to land on a drainpipe too narrow for its feet.

DANIEL

Ambition without feasibility.

NOAH

It may be conducting a trial.

The pigeon tries again, fails in the same way and chooses the roof. NOAH gives ARI the less chipped coffee cup. ARI takes it without comment. Later DANIEL asks about the role.

DANIEL

More authority?

NOAH

Enough to return some problems to their owners.

DANIEL

Dangerous.

NOAH

I have paperwork.

ARI shows the photograph of the dark municipal room with green emergency signs. DANIEL leans across the table.

DANIEL

It looks like the room is waiting.

NOAH

Without being impatient.

ARI

That is still not a visual property.

NOAH

Your methodology remains corrupt.

They laugh. The conversation moves to peaches. At ten, SAM leans against ARI'S shoulder.

ARI

We should go.

NOAH nods before checking the time. The following home-ward and calendar sequence is continuous and unhurried, at least approximately four minutes.

Transition

Outside. The sky remains light. SAM walks ahead with headphones around the neck and the recorder packed away. ARI and NOAH walk side by side. Their hands touch twice without either arranging the contact.

At the stop, the display shows nine minutes. NOAH opens the transport application.

NOAH

Eight.

ARI

The display and the application do not use the same source.

NOAH

Then one of them will enjoy being right.

The bus arrives after seven. At the apartment door, NOAH finds the key first. ARI waits without checking the time.

Inside: the labelled charger, ARI'S course folder, SAM'S waveform, the summer timetable and a train confirmation already living in the calendar. SAM places the recorder on the long table and goes to bed.

NOAH

I have the orientation at eight thirty tomorrow.

ARI

I know.

NOAH

I will leave at seven forty.

ARI

Sam and I leave at seven twenty.

NOAH

Then I will lock after.

NOAH has forwarded MALIK'S update: Tuesday's train will leave twenty minutes earlier. No request for action accompanies it. NOAH changes clothes, returns to the kitchen and touches ARI'S shoulder while passing.

NOAH

Goodnight.

ARI

Goodnight.

NOAH goes to bed. ARI washes two glasses and places them upside down. The apartment holds plumbing, refrigerator and a distant courtyard door. No score enters.

At the long table: the last pastry, SAM'S recorder and the printed Ways In waveform. ARI touches the paper and opens the weather instead of the calendar. Sunday: rain. Tuesday: wind along the coast. ARI reads nothing else for several breaths.

ARI opens the calendar. The first overnight entry contains NOAH'S new train time, hotel, site, emergency number, return train and MALIK'S boundary. Nothing has been copied into the shared note.

ARI opens SIX WEEKS. The review is scheduled for Sunday at 19:00. NOAH'S third return train is now due at 18:29. ARI changes the review to 19:30.

ARI adds no explanation. ARI closes the calendar. The screen returns to the weather.

End of Play

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